

Clarke backs calls for 'common sense' primary teaching

By DAVID TYTLER, EDUCATION EDITOR

PRIMARY schools will have to train or employ specialist teachers to ensure that children aged five to 11 are taught compulsory national curriculum lessons rather than relying on the present system of one class teacher to take all lessons, according to a report published yesterday by Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary.

While attacking the "highly questionable dogmas" adopted by some primary schools for the past 30 years, the three education specialists appointed by Mr Clarke to propose teaching reforms have refused to endorse a wholesale return to traditional teaching methods.

They have recommended that the best of all practices should be incorporated in primary school teaching but have fallen short of condemning Lady Plowden's 1967 report, which has been blamed by Mr Clarke for the introduction of child-centred education and disorganised lessons allowing different groups of children in the same class to work at their own speed on different subjects.

Mr Clarke said he expected that the report would lead to changes in most primary schools in England. "It will give teachers the self-confidence to do what common sense tells them," he said. "There will be no sense of guilt about correcting children's mistakes, no sense of guilt about grouping children according to their abilities. No sense of guilt about teaching the whole class at the same time — practices which have been squeezed out in time."

The report, from Robin Alexander, of Leeds University, Jim Rose, chief primary inspector in the school inspectorate, and Chris Woodhead, chief executive of the National Curriculum Council, said that the present problems were not caused by Lady Plowden's proposals but that many schools used her as an excuse for mediocrity.

Professor Alexander said: "We are arguing for a return

to common sense and do not believe that the extremes are as widespread as has been said over recent months."

The enquiry team does, however, accept that there has been a drop in reading standards between 1987 and 1991. A report to be published by the National Foundation for Educational Research will show that there has been a decline of between three and five months in reading age.

Mr Rose said it was clear that children should be taught by the teacher rather than relying on children to ask questions. "The problem can be summed up in the phrase you sometimes hear, that 'we teach children not subjects'," he said.

Professor Alexander and

MAIN POINTS

- The progress of primary pupils has been hampered by the influence of highly questionable dogmas that have led to excessively complex classroom practices and devalued the place of subjects in the curriculum.
- Much topic work has led to fragmentary and superficial teaching and learning. There is a need both for more sharply focused and rigorously planned topic work and for an increase in single subject teaching.
- In many schools the benefits of whole class teaching have been under-exploited.
- Standards of education will rise until teachers expect more of pupils.
- Every school should have access to expertise in all nine national curriculum subjects and in religious education.
- Teaching roles are too rigid. Specialist teachers should be introduced to strengthen the role of the class teacher.
- Streaming is a crude device that cannot do justice to the different abilities a pupil may show in different subjects and contexts.
- Decisions about the initial training of teachers should take account of the kinds of staff that primary schools now need.

his team have been told that the requirements of the national curriculum and its attendant tests have led to reduced teaching time, particularly in the basics, but said that it was premature to blame these extra demands on teachers for falling standards.

The report ruled out streaming, which was once favoured by Mr Clarke, but said that schools would have to tailor lessons to meet the most able and least able pupils. It recommended lessons for whole classes where possible but said that it would sometimes be necessary to teach individual children or small groups.

Mr Clarke was pleased that the report stressed the need for specialist teaching in the national curriculum subjects of mathematics, English, science, technology, history, geography, art and music. He also endorsed its conclusion that there was much to commend in primary schools, but that there were unacceptable wide differences in the quality of teaching and in the standards not only between different schools but within classes in the same school.

The report said that specialist teachers could be found without an automatic increase in money. Greater flexibility in the way existing staff were used and the grouping of small schools which could exchange specialist teachers would ensure a considerable improvement in standards, the report said.

Mr Clarke said that the strengthening of specialist teaching could be paid for without spending extra money. He would consider shifting funds from secondary to primary schools to reduce the present disparity.

Jack Straw, Labour's front bench education spokesman, said: "The report is a serious embarrassment to Mr Clarke for what it says on teaching methods. The report is an important contribution to the debate about teaching methods." He added: "Its authors have shown commendable independence."



Colleagues grieve: one of 700 mourners weeps at the funeral yesterday in Enfield, north London, of Sergeant Alan King, aged 41, stabbed to death in Walthamstow, northeast London, last November.

Haughey denies phone tap role

Continued from page 1

the scheme himself and denied Mr Haughey's involvement. Mr Doherty said that he could now reveal not only that Mr Haughey had been aware of his activities but that he had also taken delivery personally of all but one of the transcripts of the taped conversations.

Mr Doherty was forced to resign the party whip over the affair and has never fully recovered in spite of returning to the Dáil and more recently being elected chairman of the senate, a position from which he resigned yesterday.

After his revelations, Des O'Malley, leader of the Progressive Democrats, said that he was devastated. Dick Spring, leader of the Labour

Party, challenged Mr O'Malley to withdraw his party from the coalition.

John Bruton, leader of the main opposition Fine Gael, said: "I hope this government does not survive. The Progressive Democrats must realise the internal problems within Fianna Fáil are having a major, dreadful impact on government policy and the nation generally."

Even Mr Haughey's friends in Fianna Fáil seemed completely unnerved by Mr Doherty's sudden about-face. Jim Tunney, the chairman of the parliamentary party, was said to be "stunned and dumbfounded" by the allegations.

Geraldine Kennedy said that no denial from Mr Haughey would be sufficient to clear his name. "I think it will be very difficult for Mr Haughey to deny involvement point blank."

"There was never any evidence produced to support the taps in either case," said Ms Kennedy, who, like Mr Arnold, was awarded £10,000 damages by the High Court when they sued over the telephone tapping affair.

Mr Haughey's supporters believe, however, that his denial might yet again save him. His performance at the press conference was considered bold and assured. There also seemed to be some substance to his claim that Mr Doherty, who had admitted he had lied in the past, might be lying again to further his own political ends in his Roscommon constituency.

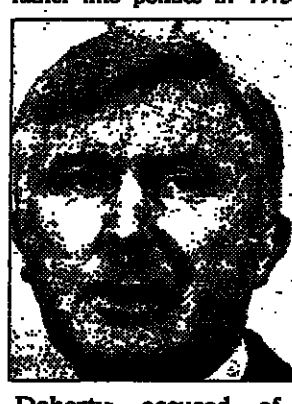
By EDWARD GORMAN, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

SEAN Doherty, the man accused by Charles Haughey, the Irish prime minister, of lying in an attempt to end his premiership, has never recovered from the damage caused by the telephone tapping scandal of 1982.

Mr Doherty was eventually forced to resign the party whip and has been discredited in the eyes of many of his former colleagues ever since.

It is often said that he, more than anyone else over the years, has personified what has been wrong with Mr Haughey's governments, a man who has openly admitted to lying and who, while in office, was associated with a series of damaging allegations of abusing his position.

Doherty, aged 46, father of four daughters, is a Fianna Fáil right winger from Roscommon in the Irish midlands. He was a policeman, who rose to the Special Branch before following his father into politics in 1973.



Doherty: accused of abusing his position

Bar calls for abolition of dock

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

BARRISTERS have called for the abolition of the dock so that defendants can sit near their lawyers as in the United States. The Bar Council, which makes the proposal in its evidence to the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice, says that the move would reflect the legal system's presumption of innocence.

The Bar also suggests incursions into the right to silence, enabling a defendant to be questioned at a pre-trial

hearing. The two reforms are in a detailed package of proposals to overhaul the criminal justice system, starting from "first principles", the Bar council said yesterday.

Overall, the Bar concludes that the adversarial system of justice in England and Wales is more likely than the inquisitorial system, used on the Continent, to achieve the "right" verdict on the evidence, and more likely to be acceptable to the public.

However, there are reforms that could be made to promote a fair system including the creation of a state-funded office of public defender, a greater role for the Crown Prosecution Service in supervising police investigations, greater safeguards on confession evidence and an independent review body to investigate alleged miscarriages of justice with power to refer them to the Court of Appeal.

Return of Baltic gold sparks a spat

By NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN promised yesterday to repay £90 million in gold bullion deposited with the Bank of England in the Thirties by the Baltic states and sold by the Wilson administration in the Sixties.

The disclosure that Whitehall was embarking on one of its slower U-turns was made by John Major after a meeting with Vytautas Landsbergis, president of Lithuania, at Downing Street.

Inevitably, given the electioneering atmosphere at Westminster, the Conservatives also sought to extract maximum political capital from an affair stretching back to the infamous Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939 and the annexation of the Baltic states by the Soviet Union in 1940. Mr Major

played his part by making a suitably statesmanlike reference to righting wrongs perpetrated by "a previous government in the late Sixties".

Douglas Hogg, a junior but combative Foreign Office minister, performed accordingly to type by filling in some of the gaps in a "shameful chapter in Britain's history". "In 1967, the then Labour government instructed the Bank of England to sell the gold, effectively expropriating the Baltic republics," Mr Hogg said in a statement. "The Liberal party supported Labour in this indefensible act. It was a betrayal of the people of the Baltic states. It was an act of appeasement towards Moscow by the then Labour government."

In case anyone doubted the domestic political significance of Britain's rapprochement with Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, Conservative Central Office plugged remaining loopholes. It dug out *Hansard* for January 22, 1969, to remind the public of the Labour and Liberal luminaries who supported the Wilson government in its deal with Moscow. They included Donald Dewar, now Labour's Scottish affairs spokesman, and Sir David Steel, the Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesman.

Labour made clear its disgust at the Tory trawl through the history books. Gerald Kaufman, its foreign affairs spokesman, flicked through the pages to the 1938 Oxford by-election in which Mr Hogg's father,

Mortgage rescue launched today

By RACHEL KELLY, PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

THE first mortgage rescue package funded from the £750 million promised by lenders before Christmas to help homeowners facing repossession is to be announced today. The Nationwide Building Society, the country's second largest, is expected to announce a deal with three London housing associations that will buy properties throughout London and turn them into rented or shared-ownership homes.

The housing associations are believed to be the London and Quadrant, the Notting Hill, and the Newham housing trusts. The associations are said to have secured a very low interest rate loan.

Don Wood, chief executive of London and Quadrant Housing Trust, said: "We have been negotiating with Nationwide and affordability has been very much on the agenda. We feel we've achieved that. We are helping people who would otherwise have been homeless."

Nationwide said that it could not confirm or deny the rescue deals in advance of its press conference this morning. The timing of the announcement, however, is in advance of government expectations.

Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, told the House of Commons yesterday that mortgage lenders would announce measures within weeks to counter the wave of home repossessions.

Trusts to treat more patients

Health service trusts are expected to treat 7 per cent more patients this year than last year, double the increase in non-trust hospitals, Duncan Nichol, NHS chief executive, told MPs yesterday.

Mr Nichol told the Commons health committee that trusts had introduced more weekend and evening clinics and 24-hour community nursing services due to their new freedom for local pay flexibility. The increases in the number of patients treated could not be wholly attributable to Trust status, however.

Projecting six month figures to the end of the year, he said that trusts would treat 7 per cent more in-patients, compared with 3 per cent by non-trusts.

BR 'hindering death enquiry'

British Rail has failed to provide all the information needed for an investigation into the deaths of passengers in falls from high-speed trains, the Health and Safety Executive said yesterday.

The executive said that it had sought details of circumstances surrounding 325 deaths from 1972 to 1990. It was still waiting for statistics from BR. "We have had to go to board level to get the information we want, and we still have not got it," a spokesman said. He dismissed reports that faulty doors had been identified as the cause of the deaths, saying that there was no evidence of that so far.

Appeal rejected

A Dutch court has rejected compensation claims by Gerard Harte and three suspected IRA members who spent nearly a year in custody before being acquitted of the murder of two Australian tourists in 1990. The court dismissed the claims by Donagh Maguire, aged 26, Paul Hughes, 28, and Sean Hick, 31, because they had refused to answer police questions during the enquiry.

The day colliery jewel lost its glitter

THE early morning scene outside Whitmoor colliery yesterday could have been taken straight from a British Coal advertisement promoting the virtues of a new look, clean and technologically advanced mining industry.

No obtrusive pit head winding gear here, no de-

After the loss of 1,300 jobs in the Yorkshire mines, Peter Davenport reports on the shattered dreams at one pit

even the merest hint of the coal dust that pervades the traditional colliery yard. Instead, the bright sun burnt the mist off the carefully landscaped hills, grazed by

a flock of sheep, which surround Whitmoor, a low-rise complex that looks more like a hi-tech computer factory. Only 10 miles south of the splendour of York Minster, it

sits unobtrusively in peaceful countryside.

This was then to be the future — only yesterday, it was a dream turned sour for the 495 miners, many of whom had moved to the colliery, part of the new, £1.4 billion Selby coalfield, in the expectation of securing a well-paid, long-term future in the aftermath of the miners' strike of 1984 to 1985.

British Coal confirmed yesterday that it was shedding 195 jobs from Whitmoor as part of an "efficiency drive" throughout its Selby group, which will see 1,105 men go from four pits. The reaction at Whitmoor was one of disbelief. It was not supposed to happen at these new, super pits. One miner, still in his bright orange overalls, reflected a common feeling, saying: "They went out of their way to get us to come here. Men uprooted their families, left their friends behind, and took on big mortgages, and now we get this kick in the teeth."

Joe Lyman, aged 47, the NUM branch treasurer at the pit, said that up to 30 per cent of the workforce had moved their families in south and west Yorkshire that had been closed since the strike. Men had been attracted, Mr Lyman said, by prospects of wages of up to £300 a week, high bonuses and a generous financial package from British Coal, including mortgage assistance over seven years that, at its highest, was worth a total of £17,000. "The lads are absolutely stunned, and yes, there is anger because they feel they were sold out here," Mr Lyman said.

The job losses at Whitmoor are the latest setback for the Selby field, once hailed as the "jewel in the crown" of British Coal. The £1.4 billion development cost a third more than expected and has been dogged by geological problems underground.

British Coal intends to meet job losses by voluntary redundancy, with some men qualifying for £35,000 payments. Although some will leap at the chance, there was concern yesterday about the prospect of compulsory redundancy if not enough volunteers.

Ninety jobs are to go at a centre for clean coal research in Grimethorpe, near Barnsley, South Yorkshire.

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Prior the top target on IRA hit list, court told

By Stewart Tandler, Crime Correspondent

AN IRA hit list including the names of two former Northern Ireland secretaries was found after a search of a man accused of being a member on active service, the Central Criminal Court was told yesterday.

The list covered people linked to Northern Ireland of the services and included photographs and personal details. As well as the names of Lord Prior and Lord Mason of Barnsley, it identified senior military commanders, the prosecution said.

Also on it were another former cabinet minister, Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, the Tory MP for Wealden, and Sir Charles Tidbury, who was chairman of the William and Mary Tercentenary Trust, which had close links to Northern Ireland. Thirteen officers listed included General Sir Richard Trant, General Sir John Adair, Sir John Fieldhouse, and Major General Julian Thompson.

The cache, which included six weapons and material for making 22 bombs ranging from booby traps to a 50lb device, lacking only a detonator, was discovered in the

boot of a Lada car parked behind the home of William McKane, the accused, in November 1990.

The equipment also included a *Who's Who* that bore the fingerprints of Nissen Quinlivan and Pearse McAuley, the IRA suspects who escaped from Brixton prison last year, it was alleged. The two men's fingerprints were found at entries for Sir Geoffrey Howe and Douglas Hurd.

Yesterday Mr McKane, aged 25, of north-west London, denied conspiring with Quinlivan and McAuley and others to murder Sir Charles Tidbury and others; conspiracy with Quinlivan and McAuley and others to cause explosions, and possession of firearms together with Quinlivan and McAuley.

John Nutting, for the prosecution, said that the arrest of Mr McKane followed the arrest of Quinlivan and McAuley in October 1990. The seizure of the two men frustrated the IRA's campaign, which was halted three weeks later by Mr McKane's arrest and the discovery of the Lada. He said that Mr McKane was "inextricably



Alleged targets: Mr Hurd, Sir Charles Tidbury, Major General Thompson, and Sir Richard Trant

Lord Prior, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Sir John Fieldhouse, Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, and the Sierra car being taken from Stonehenge

linked to what is, on the evidence in this case, manifestly an active service unit".

At the very least he had supplied and preserved documents useful for false identification, Mr Nutting said. He provided transport; stored explosives or allowed them to be kept in his flat; was a confidant of Quinlivan and McAuley; held keys for a flat they used; and was entrusted with safeguarding their equipment and moving it into hiding after their arrest.

Mr Nutting said that in the summer of 1990 the six-

strong active service unit began to reconnoitre possible places of attack. On 13 September Quinlivan was seen in the passenger seat of a blue Ford Sierra parked off a road between Reading and Andover. His companion, who looked like McAuley, was getting out of the car.

A few hours later in Edgware, north London, the car driven by McAuley was in a hit-and-run accident. The driver of the other car took the number of the Ford.

The next weekend, the active service unit headed for

the Hampshire farm home of Sir Charles. The house, near Portsmouth, was being guarded by armed police. On the night of 15 to 16 September, Sir Charles and his wife came home and went to bed.

At 2.20am one guard in the house heard the sound of someone trying to turn a door handle at the back of the house. He heard someone walking on gravel and saw two armed men emerge at the front of the house heading for the garage.

The policeman alerted the rest of the guard. The guards

cocked their guns and as one made his way forward to challenge the men, the two gunmen fled.

A police dog van called to the scene passed the Sierra, which was carrying three men. A description of the car was put out on the police radio, but the officer in the van had mistaken it for a Renault Fuego and the men escaped. The car and two men were finally found on October 2, when they were seen parked near Stonehenge in Wiltshire. They were arrested at gunpoint.

Mr Nutting said that Mr McKane was linked to the others by finds in the cache and an address used by the unit in north London. In his flat police found a birth certificate used to set up a false identity, maps which bore the fingerprints of Quinlivan and McAuley and keys to a flat they had used.

Other papers and documents had their fingerprints. Bin liners in the boot of the Lada holding clothing and equipment carried Mr McKane's fingerprints. The case continues today.

IN THE TIMES ON SATURDAY

LOOK



"Somewhere out in the heavens there is a planet just like ours. On it there must be intelligent life." A guide to the galaxy Saturday Review

LISTEN



Gorbachev praised it. So did the Beirut hostages. The World Service of the BBC in fact has 120 million listeners a week. Melinda Wittstock spends 24 hours there Saturday Review

TASTE



French burgundy of 1990 is being described as the greatest vintage of recent times. Jane MacQuitty joins in the praise Weekend Times

Beck abuse enquiry to be private

By Craig Seton

EVIDENCE at the official enquiry into the case of Frank Beck, the senior Leicestershire social worker jailed for life for abusing children in council care over 13 years, is to be heard in private, it is to be heard in private, it is to be heard in private.

Andrew Kirkwood, QC, chairman of the enquiry, told a preliminary hearing that he would take evidence in private to enable witnesses, including former child victims of Beck, to talk freely. A full report of the enquiry's findings would be made public.

Two Leicestershire Conservative MPs had called for the enquiry to hear witnesses in public.

The enquiry, ordered by William Waldegrave, health secretary, opens on February 12. It has the power to subpoena witnesses and call for documents. Its terms of reference are to enquire into and report on the county council's management responses to complaints and other *prima facie* evidence of abuse, malpractice and other matters concerning the council's children homes between 1973 and 1986.

Many of the children, now adults, who were in Beck's care are due to give evidence. Former senior county council officials are also to be called.

Mr Kirkwood said that, at the core of the evidence, was detail involving young people at times of particular difficulty in their lives. He feared if every word was in public, and he intended to respect their rights to confidentiality.

Rural planning curbs to be eased

By Michael Hornsby, Agriculture Correspondent

THE government put itself on a collision course with the countryside-lobby yesterday by signalling that huge areas of agricultural land no longer warranted special protection from development.

In its latest guidance on rural planning for local authorities, the environment department said that two thirds of farmland in England and Wales was of moderate to poor quality and there was no longer any particular reason to prevent its being put to non-farming use.

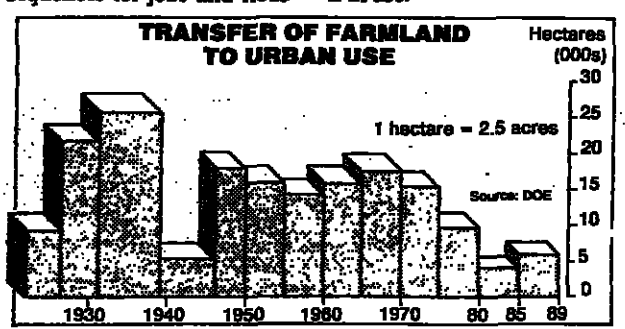
The document, presented in the Commons yesterday by Sir George Young, the planning minister, is the first revision of rural planning guidelines since early 1983 and markedly strengthens official encouragement for light industry and new housing.

The new guidance comes just over two weeks after John Major, the prime minister, in a speech to the Oxford Farming Conference, questioned the need "to offer as much protection to farmland now that we have [food] surplus". Planning officers, he said, should consider the consequences for jobs and hous-

ing before turning down development applications. The document, *The Countryside and the Rural Economy*, says that "little weight" should normally be given to the loss of farmland defined as being of poor or moderate quality. The only exceptions would be "areas such as hills and uplands where particular agricultural practices themselves contribute to the quality of the environment; or to the rural economy, in some special way".

The government has dropped previous guidance that farm buildings should be shown to be "redundant" before an alternative use is permitted. It also tells local planning officers to give preference to re-use of farm buildings as light industry workshops over their conversion to homes.

Tony Burton, senior planner at the Council for the Protection of Rural England, said: "This is a substantial shift in official policy towards the countryside and is going to cause an unholy row. Simply because too much food is being produced does not mean that too much land is in use."



Liverpool may close churches

The Bishop of Liverpool denied yesterday that a recommendation for the closure of seven out of 29 churches represented a withdrawal from the inner city.

The 90-page report by a commission set up by the Right Rev David Sheppard recommends the closures and a 10 per cent cut in clergy because of a fall in population.

Instead of 25 parishes in central Liverpool, there would be 11 with 22 churches. Clergy would no longer work alone in small inner-city parishes, but would co-operate in team ministries.

Churches empty, page 6

Father's search

Ian McNichol, aged 52, of Tillingham, Essex, joined more than 100 police searching the site of a rock music festival near Liphook, Hampshire, from where his daughter Dinah, aged 18, disappeared six months ago.

Phones fraud

Foreign students at Nottingham University who discovered a software flaw in the campus telephone exchange rang up £30,000 worth of free calls to numbers around the world in the four months it took BT to spot the error.

Children die

Subhi and Jade Chapman, aged two and three, died last night in a fire at their home in Stockton, Cleveland. Mark Hornsby, aged 26, and Jane Chapman, aged 21, who escaped with three-month-old Mark, lost their previous house in a fire a year ago.

Crumbling heritage faces bleak future

By John Young

NEARLY 37,000 listed buildings in England, 7 per cent of the total, are at risk of being lost through neglect, a report published yesterday says. Twice that number are at risk unless rapid action is taken to repair and restore them, in many cases by finding new owners prepared to take on the responsibility.

The report, *Buildings at Risk*, is based on a sample survey carried out by English Heritage, in collaboration with local authorities, of some 43,000 historic buildings and monuments in 59 districts. The survey found alarming levels of decay in uninhabitable and redun-

dant structures, including old farm buildings, mills, power stations, follies and tombs. Great houses and other buildings of outstanding national importance tend to attract the most attention, but are not generally in the most desperate need of repair, the report suggests. Rather, it is the modest landmarks — public monuments in town centres, ruined tombs in churchyards, and crumbling barns surrounded by open fields — that are most likely to disappear entirely if further neglected. While these structures seldom serve a profitable purpose, they make an enormous contribution to our townscapes and landscapes, the report says.

"Often there is not the money, sometimes not the will, to keep these places in a state of basic repair, to prevent them from decaying to the point of no return, a situation aggravated in a time of recession," Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, chairman of English Heritage, said yesterday.

There were thousands of lesser buildings which remained between newer developments, and which gave towns and villages character. "Many of these are structures that cannot be occupied or converted to a modern use, such as bridges, Georgian follies or magnificent funeral monuments," he said. "Of course we cannot, and should not, seek to preserve everything in an unthinking blanket fashion." But listing did not guarantee that a building would be kept in good repair, will, knowledge and money were also required.

"We badly need a new heritage bill," Lord Montagu said. He had been given a strong indication that time would be made available for such a new measure in the next Parliament, whichever party was in power. "I hope that heritage will never be-

come a political football," he added.

Jennifer Page, English Heritage's chief executive, said that it was important to get the problem in perspective. More than three quarters of the 500,000 or so listed buildings were well cared for but a substantial problem remained.

About 16 per cent of all listed buildings were classed as "structures", including tombs and statues. Most had no immediate economic benefit to their owners, and not surprisingly one in five were in poor condition. Yet they were often important architectural pieces in their own right.

The survey had been partly funded by a £200,000 grant from the environment department which, she estimated, had met about 70 per cent of local authorities' costs. English Heritage was encouraging all councils to undertake similar exercises, and hoped to see the whole country covered by 1995.

Buildings at Risk: a sample survey (English Heritage, Room 305, Kings House, 429 Oxford Street, London W1R 2HD)

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The average family income of a Times reader is £26,700. Labour's tax and national insurance plans, plus an increase in the basic rate of income tax of 10p in the £, needed to pay for Labour's spending promises, would raise the tax and national insurance bill of such a family (assuming it has average tax allowances) by £2,375 a year.

Malnutrition 'could kill hospital patients'

BY THOMSON PRENTICE, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THOUSANDS of seriously ill patients admitted to British hospitals every year are also suffering from unrecognised and potentially fatal malnutrition, according to a report by health experts.

Half a million in-patients a year are under-nourished. At least 30,000 need artificial nutrition and the real total requiring such treatment could be twice as many, the report says. Quoting Florence Nightingale, it says many "starve in the midst of plenty" despite the availability of good food.

Doctors and nurses often fail to recognise malnutrition because they are not trained to look for it, but it prolongs recovery from illness and can

lead to death from unnecessary complications.

Such unawareness involves all age groups from infants to the elderly, the specialists say. "While starvation elsewhere in the world haunts us, healthy people in affluent countries take food and drink for granted," the report by the King's Fund Centre says.

Yet there are also those who are weak and wasted through lack of food, not because they cannot afford or obtain it, but because they cannot or do not eat or absorb it. These babies, children and adults who starve in the midst of plenty are the subject of this report.

The document, by a working party of nutritionists, dieticians, surgeons and specialist nurses, says that simple improvements in hospital care of the malnourished could prevent innumerable deaths while saving the health service £250 million a year.

However, the report also shows that three out of four district general hospitals in Britain have no formally organised nutritional team to achieve such human and financial savings. "Patients starve because they cannot eat or absorb the nutrients from a normal diet. This delays recovery from medical and surgical disorders and at worst is life threatening," John Lennard-Jones, chairman of the working party, said yesterday.

Professor Lennard-Jones, consultant gastroenterologist at St Mark's Hospital, London, said: "We are not talking about healthy diets or hospital food but about the prevention of malnutrition in illness. There is a tendency to regard loss of weight in the ill as an inevitable consequence. It is not."

Malnutrition led to mental and physical disabilities, including loss of the will to live and vulnerability to infection. But concentrated nutritional drinks, costing as little as 50p each, could save lives.

David Silk, joint director of the gastro-enterology and nutrition department at the Central Middlesex Hospital, London, said: "Nutritional care of hospital patients is poorly organised and of a sub-optimal standard." Ivan Johnston, professor of surgery at Newcastle University, said: "Mortality after surgery, and complication rates, are much higher in undernourished patients. Some get the energy they need for survival from their own muscles."

A Positive Approach to Nutrition as Treatment (from Bailey Discretion, Leasford Road, New Romney, Kent TN28 8XU; £5.50)

Court aide cleared of book theft

A coroner's officer was cleared yesterday of stealing a book from the flat of Kenneth Williams, the *Carry On* film actor, while the comedian's body lay there.

However, a jury at Southwark crown court, south London, found Roy Bellamy, of Chalk Farm, north London, guilty of stealing stamps from the home of a woman aged 80 in Hampstead. The court was told that identical stamps to those missing were found in an album at his home. He was acquitted of stealing £400 of the woman's savings.

Bellamy, aged 42, coroner's officer for St Pancras, north London, will be sentenced today.

Toys sold

A sale of 260 toys from Mint & Boned, the failed antique toy company, made £48,391 at Sotheby's in London. A German collector paid the top price, £47,300, for a set of six tinplate fire brigade toys.

Apex order

Apex Trust, which gives training to ex-offenders, has been put in administration by the High Court at its board's request. Administrators from Cork Gully, the accountants, have about four weeks to try to save it.

Barrage plan

The energy department has announced a £50 million plan for a barrage across the mouth of the river Wyre, Lancashire, for electricity generation.

Liverpool sings its praises to America

BY ALAN HAMILTON

AMERICAN businesses are being urged to invest in a vibrant, attractive British city with a reliable and productive workforce, moderate civic politics, a world-famous musical tradition, and a waterfront view to rival that of Sydney opera house from across the harbour. At first glance, the sales pitch does not call to mind the Liverpool we thought we knew.

Next month, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra begins a two-week tour of 11 cities in the eastern United States, closely followed by a team from Merseyside Development Corporation singing the praises of the area as the perfect base for American companies to attack the single European market.

Concerts, it is believed, will create a more lasting impression than boring businessmen bursting with facts and figures. Both Baltimore and Boston have declared "Liverpool days" when the orchestra is in town. Liverpool believes that it already has a foot in the transatlantic door, being the only English city outside London that many Americans can name.

Desmond Pitcher, chairman of the development corporation, admitted at the campaign's launch in London yesterday that to have undertaken such an initiative five years ago would have been a waste of time. "There were too many opposing factions in the city pulling against each other," he said. "Now, we are in harmony." Americans will be assured

that the city council is now in safe hands and that the area is earmarked for a £550 million injection of public money over the next five years.

Merseyside's missionaries believe that they go to convert America with a clean slate. "Negative perceptions of Liverpool are not established," according to Bob Odell, the corporation's American representative, whose Scots-born grandfather sailed from the Pier Head. They have, on the whole, not heard of the 1981 Tynes riots. Derek Haxton's politics, the polluted river, unemployment still over 14 per cent, or the urban decay.

Ministers are backing the sales effort and are falling over themselves to lay past ghosts. "All the assumptions about Liverpool from the Seventies and Eighties are mercifully being shed," Michael Portillo, local government minister, said yesterday. "It is now vibrant and attractive, with a reliable and productive workforce. This is indicated by both the Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise deciding to relocate to Merseyside."

Mr Portillo may be making a dangerous assumption in thinking that incoming companies would want both the taxman and the Vatman as neighbours. He made another when he declared: "It takes a while to shake off the stigma, but in the US they have never had these bad impressions. They see Liverpool as an interesting city, where they speak English." Oh, come now.



Fleshed out: Andrew Kitchener, of the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, with a skeleton of a dodo built from bones found in a Mauritius swamp and a model of the extinct bird. The skeleton has been returned to Mauritius this week. Diary, page 16

Managers blamed for disasters

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

HUMAN error has been at the root of almost every disaster since the sinking of the Titanic, a report published today concludes.

By analysing accidents such as the Flixborough explosion, the King's Cross Underground fire and the Piper Alpha disaster, the report seeks to pinpoint the causes and provide a guide.

"The errors that lead to disasters are symptomatic of failures in safety management at senior level," Geoff Ballard, of SRD, the safety and reliability consultancy of Automatic Energy Authority Technology who produced the report, says. "Directors and senior managers have to realise they cannot delegate responsibility for safety."

In the case of the Flixborough chemical plant explosion and the gas leak at Bhopal in India, commercial pressures had led to cuts or ill-considered operational changes, the report says.

Management at Risk (SRD Association, Wigshaw Lane, Culcheth, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 4NE; £95)

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Snapshot of society

Sick man of Europe is turning green

REPORTS BY BILL FROST AND JEREMY LAURANCE

DIVORCE, drug addiction, illegitimate birth and Blackpool beach are booming as Britain becomes a nation of extremes dominated by television and plagued by petty crime.

However, we can pride ourselves on safer roads and an increasing reverence for the environment, according to the latest edition of *Social Trends*.

Trends, the statistician's guide to contemporary life. As usual, a mountain of data is there to be scaled, from Britain's most popular tourist destination (Blackpool Pleasure Beach) to the growth in bottle banks.

Among other nuggets, the Central Statistical Office survey shows that British workers took more days off sick

than their counterparts in every EC country except The Netherlands. But Britons would seem to work a longer week than other Europeans, putting in an average of 44 hours. Germans worked an average of 40.2 hours.

The United Kingdom has one of the highest marriage rates in the EC. In 1989, there were 6.8 weddings per 1,000 eligible individuals, but the divorce rate for the same year ran at 12.6 per 1,000. Only Denmark registered a higher number of broken marriages. The proportion of births outside marriage has risen sharply, from less than 11 per cent in 1979 to 28 per cent in 1990.

Deaths on the road were much lower than elsewhere in the EC, with the exception of Norway. The incidence of Aids was also less pronounced. Last year there were 78 reported cases per million in Britain, compared with an EC average of 135.

Crime and drug abuse, however, continued to grow. The UK had the highest number of prisoners in the EC and a growing number of registered heroin addicts. Car thefts, burglaries and handling stolen goods made up almost 90 per cent of recorded offences.

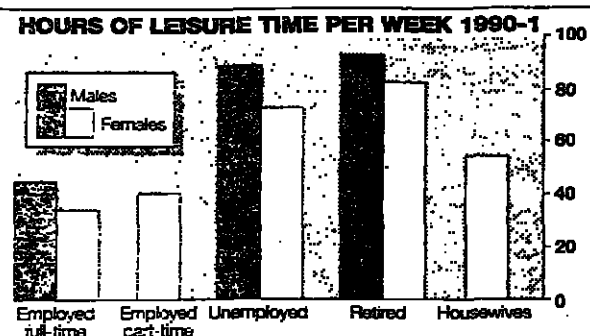
Apathy was alive and well, too. Turnout figures for EC elections were the worst in the community. Only 36 per cent bothered to vote, compared with 93 per cent in Belgium.

Television continued to dominate leisure activities, church membership fell and Alcoholics Anonymous put on members. However, growing numbers joined groups dedicated to the preservation of the environment.

As ever, *Social Trends* allows the pessimist to amass a welter of evidence to prove that Britain is going to the dogs. But the survey's great strength is that there is also enough data to prove the opposite.

Sales this year are expected to top 7,500, making it something of a Stationery Office best seller.

Social Trends (Central Statistical Office; £24.75)



Viewers take time off from television

THE number of hours spent watching television has declined slightly but the nightly diet of soaps, game shows and films is still the most popular way of occupying leisure time, the survey said.

In 1990 people spent an average of 24 hours a week watching television, compared with 26 hours in 1986. Drama was the most popular choice, with news bulletins a close second. Light entertainment and sport also attracted large audiences.

By 1990, 14.8 million households were believed to have at least one video recorder, compared with 9.6 million four years earlier. Between 1986 and 1990, the number of radio listeners increased by 18 per cent with rises in all age groups, most noticeably between 10 and 34.

The cinema has regained its popularity with 64 per cent having seen a film at least once during the year, a rise of 4 per cent on 1989. The growth in attendance was highest among those aged 15-24. Blackpool Pleasure

Beach was the most popular tourist attraction in 1990, with 6.5 million visitors, followed by the Albert Dock in Liverpool and the British Museum, which had almost five million visitors.

West End theatre attendances were also up in 1990 with a total audience of 11.3 million. The highest proportion of theatregoers was in the 25-34 age group.

Football attendances increased for the third year running. The average gate at First Division games was almost 23,000.

Some trends, however, remained static. The proportion of adults who did not take a holiday stood at two out of every five, as it has for almost 20 years, but among those who do enjoy a break, there has been a trend towards taking more than one holiday a year. The number of holidays taken abroad has increased by half in less than ten years. In 1990, 20.5 million Britons went abroad, with Spain and France the most popular destinations.



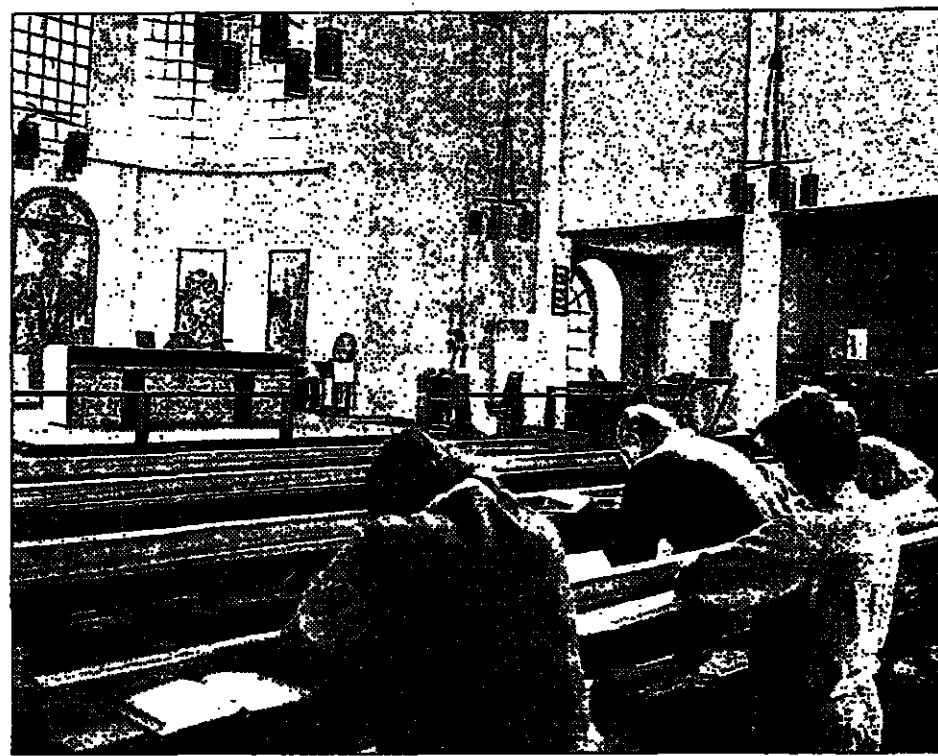
Mixed fate: followers flock to Islam, above, while Church of England pews remain empty, below

Christian churches in decline

CHURCHGOING is in decline but the country's mosques and temples are overflowing. Christian churches are estimated to have lost almost 1.3 million members since 1975, a 16 per cent fall. But other religions, such as Islam and Hinduism, have gained more than one million members, a 130 per cent rise.

Among the individual denominations, the number of adults attending Roman Catholic churches was down 14 per cent between 1979 and 1989; Methodist attendances were down 11 per cent, and Anglican 9 per cent. However, there was an increase of 42 per cent in the number attending the Independent Church, and increases of 8 and 4 per cent for the Pentecostal and Afro-Caribbean churches.

The proportion of 15 to 19-year-olds attending Christian churches fell from 13 to 9 per cent and, among 20 to 29-year-olds, from 9 to 6 per cent.



Number of new heroin addicts rises sharply

RECORD numbers of people have become addicted to hard drugs, according to *Social Trends*. The survey also shows that convictions for possession and supply are rising sharply.

The total number of drug offences dealt with by police and customs officers rose in 1990 to 45,000. In 1986 the figure was only 24,000. Conviction for possession of unlawful drugs almost doubled over the four-year period.

Doctors reported that the number of new heroin addicts increased from 5,639 in 1989 to 6,923 in 1990. Eight times as many people were

now using controlled drugs as 17 years ago. The rise was a reflection of doctors' awareness that they must report the number of addicts seeking treatment to the Home Office, the survey said.

Crimes against property accounted for the large majority of offences in 1990. Theft, particularly involving motor vehicles, and handling stolen goods made up half of all crimes logged in England and Wales in 1990, with almost 2.5 million offences recorded.

The risk of being a victim of crime was higher among ethnic minority groups than

among white people. Asians and Afro-Caribbeans, saw many of the offences committed against them as racially motivated. "Being threatened and assaulted because of race is common. For Asians, evidence of a racial element in offences against their property is relatively frequent," the survey said.

Murder victims often knew their killers. About two thirds of male victims and four fifths of female victims were related to, or acquainted with, their attackers. Forty-three per cent of the 226 women murdered in 1990 died at the hands of a lover or husband. Thirty-seven per cent of the 381 men victims were related to, or acquainted with, their attackers. The clear-up rate ranged from 17 per cent in the Metropolitan police force area to 51 per cent in Gwent.

Of the 4.4 million offences recorded, only 10,000 involved firearms — a rise of 9 per cent on 1989, but five times the number in 1972. The biggest increases in the use of firearms were in criminal damage and robbery. The number of prisoners fell slightly in 1990 to stand at 46,000, against 50,000 two years earlier. Ethnic minority groups made up a higher proportion of those in prison than they did of the country's population.

WI women forsake hymns for hims

WOMEN are giving up jam-making and hymn singing in favour of a freer association with the opposite sex.

Membership of women's voluntary organisations has plummeted over the past 20 years. Both the National Federation of Women's Institutes and National Union of Townswomen's Guilds have lost more than 100,000 members each. Their members appear to have turned to paid work, more leisure time with their families and other voluntary organisations that do not exclude men.

The women's institutes, however, still hold a commanding position in the voluntary scene with 319,000 members. The movement was founded in Canada 100 years ago and held its first meeting in Britain at Llanfairpwll, Gwynedd, in 1915. Membership peaked at 467,000 in 1954 but has dropped back since the late Sixties.

Changed attitudes to women's role in society are thought to be behind the decline. "At a time of growing emphasis on equal opportunities, single gender organisations have less appeal," Foster Murphy, director of the Volunteer Centre, said. "With more women going out to work, in the spare time people have got they like to do things together."

Overall, more people are doing voluntary work than ever before. The National Association of Leagues of Hospital Friends has gained 100,000 members since 1971, a 40 per cent increase, and membership of many other organisations has grown.

The South has the largest proportion of volunteers. Professionals are more likely to volunteer than other socio-economic groups and women more than men. But there is a mismatch between volunteers and opportunities in some areas. The National Trust, favoured by retired professionals, is turning people away in parts of the South-East while the St John Ambulance brigade is neglected.

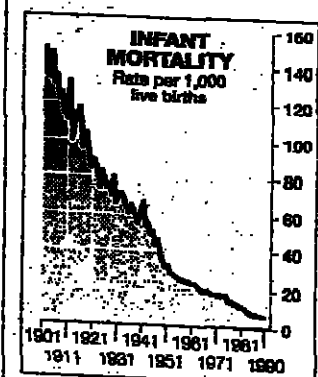
One of the greatest success stories has been the Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme, inaugurated in 1956 as a programme of activities for young people run by volunteers. More than two million young people from all parts of the world have taken part since the scheme began. The number rose 40 per cent during the 1970s and 18 per cent during the 1980s. In 1990, 200,000 young people participated and gained 39,000 awards.

Infant deaths fall further

THE big fall in infant mortality is a measure of improving health and living standards. This was most pronounced in the first half of the century but the downward trend has continued. Since 1950 there have been only two occasions when infant mortality increased from one year to the next.

In 1990 the rate was 7.9 deaths for every 1,000 live births, a fall of one third from compared with 1981. But there remain wide differences between the social classes.

The rate was over 75 per cent higher for babies whose fathers were unskilled than for those whose fathers were professionals.



More people choose to live on their own

MORE people in Britain are living alone. Single person households have grown from an eighth of the total in 1961 to more than a quarter in 1990.

Much of the growth is due to an increasing number of career women who choose to enjoy the company of men in the evenings or at weekends to avoid being landed with the traditional tasks of cleaning and cooking which still tend to fall to them if they live with a partner.

They also need relationships less as their careers have come to matter more. "There is always a conflict between the commitment you make to yourself and the need to be intimately associated with others," Chris Clulow, chairman of the Tavistock Institute of Marital Studies, London, said. "More women are taking the opportunity to get some of the satisfaction from

work that previously came only from the family."

But there is a cost. By their mid-30s, career women find that most eligible men are married. Many of the remaining men are poorly educated, suffering from a chronic illness or lacking in social graces. The Family Policy Studies Centre calls it a "mismatch in the marriage market". This is reflected in growing childlessness.

Among women now aged 46, only 10 per cent have no children but the proportion is expected to rise to 17 per cent among those now aged 36. It is unclear, however, where responsibility lies. It may be that career women are becoming choosier about who they marry. Or it may be that men do not like marrying women more intelligent or successful than themselves.

Leading article, page 17

Young intent on saving the planet

PUBLIC concern over the environment has increased significantly with most people ready to play their part in saving the planet.

Many have modified their behaviour by conserving energy and boycotting goods that might damage the environment. Sales of ozone-friendly aerosols have risen sharply, and there is a greater willingness to protect the landscape. *Social Trends* said that many would now pick up their "empties" to a bottle bank and use alternative transport to the car.

There has been a consis-

tent growth in support for groups concerned with protecting the environment, the survey found. The National Trust, with more than two million members in 1990, was the most popular choice. Its membership had doubled in less than a decade.

Support for Friends of the Earth also showed "remarkable growth", with an increase of 92,000 members between 1981 and 1990. Young people were very much in the vanguard of the green movement; membership of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds included 116,000 children.

Oil pollution from tankers, rigs and other sources has increased with 764 separate incidents reported, the largest number over the past decade. Such accidents caused great damage to the marine environment and resulted in the death of birds, fish and plants.

Also highlighted is the growing threat to the quality of British water. In 1989-90 there were almost 27,000 pollution incidents, but only 309 prosecutions. One in every three cases was blamed on industry, and one in four on sewage leaking in the water mains. Many native spe-

cies have declined or become rare, the survey found. In particular insects. Three of Britain's 43 species of dragonfly have become extinct and a further 12 are vulnerable or declining, and most of the country's 55 species of butterfly have declined significantly.

Flora, too, are at risk. Fourteen of the 1,425 species of native seed-bearing plants have become extinct. Public concern about noise has increased. "The number of complaints made to environmental health officers has more than trebled in the past ten years."

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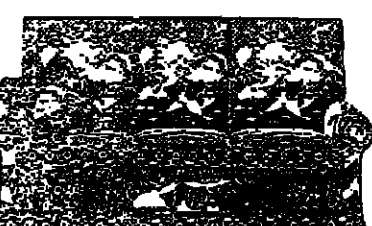
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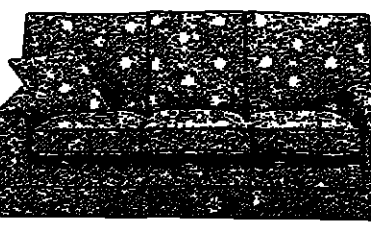
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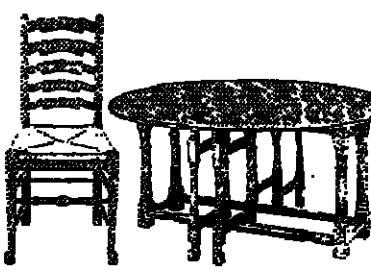


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Car makers accelerate production

Car production in Britain is set to rise to two million a year by the middle of the decade, Edward Leigh, the consumer affairs minister, said in a written reply. Last year 1,236,922 were built. He said the "outstanding export performance" of the industry over the past year had done much to alleviate the short-term difficulties caused by the slump.

Poisoned food

A steady rise in food poisoning has been reported to the Office of Population, Censuses and Surveys for England and Wales. Stephen Dorrell, the junior health minister, said there were 10,318 cases in 1990, 20,702 in 1984, 39,713 in 1988 and a provisional figure of 53,881 last year.

Businesses fail

The number of companies wound up in the High Court rose from 3,436 in 1989 to 5,037 in 1990, Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Attorney-General, said.

Parliament today

Commons (2.30): Questions: Home Office prime minister. Debates on Opposition motions on poverty and on Ravenaraig. Lords (3): Local Government Finance Bill, committee, second day.

Autumn statement debate

Tories defy gloom over recession

BY OUR PARLIAMENTARY STAFF

THE economic recovery has been much slower in coming than predicted, the Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted yesterday. But there were good grounds for believing that it would become firmly established this year. "The foundations are in place," Mr Lamont told MPs.

Opening the debate on his autumn statement on government spending plans, Mr Lamont confirmed that he would present his Budget on March 10. While not anticipating what would be in it, he pledged: "We will continue our prudent stewardship of public finances, in sharp contrast to the reckless promises and muddled menaces of the party opposite."

He praised industry for keeping up exports despite difficult conditions and said that manufacturers and retailers were reacting in exactly the right way to weak demand — cutting prices. It was pure folly to imagine, as Labour did, that Britain could isolate itself from the world economy, he said.

One reason for the fall in home demand was a rise in savings, he said. Many people, having incurred large debts in the late 1980s, were

now repaying them and building up savings. In the long run, however, increased savings would help to finance investment, reduce real interest rates and strengthen the economy. "That means that recovery will be stronger and more soundly based," he said.

Mr Lamont admitted that the recession had caused hardship. But it was irresponsible to talk about a never-ending recession, as Labour did. He quoted promises made by members of the shadow cabinet and asked whether these were pledges or empty words. At least, he said, people had known what Labour intended to do on taxes — to raise them.

Referring to a dinner at an Italian restaurant where Mr Kinnoch reportedly told journalists that Labour could phase in higher national insurance payments, he told the Opposition leader: "I don't know if it was the effect of the Frascati, but you seem to have been in a very expansive mood." The dinner had cost Labour its last vestige of credibility on taxation, he said.

John Smith, the shadow chancellor, accused Mr Lamont of trying to divert attention from forecasts of



Building a boom: the foundations for economic recovery are in place, Lamont says

growth in the autumn statement which he characterised as "rubbish". "We are still declining in this country rather than expanding. We are at the very best bumping along the bottom," he said.

Mr Smith accused the Chancellor of making the forecasts with an eye to a November election. Disputing claims that Britain would be the first country out of recession, he accused Mr Lamont of having the "non-Midas touch". Every area where recovery was predicted went the opposite way.

Tory MPs retaliated by putting Mr Smith under pressure to explain how Labour would pay for its pledges to uprate child benefit and increase the state pension. Mr Smith said: "We will be able to raise — from increases in the top rate of income tax, and from taking the upper limit of national insurance contributions — more than enough money to pay for our increases."

Mr Lamont said Labour's package would not be self-financing and its higher rates

of tax would bring in only £1.25 billion in the first year, not £2.5 billion as they claimed. "The money is not there," he said.

Mr Smith was also challenged on Labour's plans to tax income on savings over £3,000 on the grounds that this would hit 750,000 basic rate taxpayers. He said: "The purpose of our changes is to treat unearned and earned income in exactly the same way, and I think that is a first-class principle that should be there in all taxation systems."

Alan Beith, the Liberal Democrat spokesman, said that long-term measures were needed to deal with long-term problems, starting with serious investment in the education system. Investment was also needed in transport, he said. That could have been done earlier in the recession. It would have been better to get the links for the Channel tunnel established in time, at the same time countering the cyclical effects of the recession.

Budget date, page 1

Confident Major plots a Whitehall reshuffle

It is a measure of renewed Tory confidence that ministers are speculating once more how Whitehall might be reshaped by a second Major administration and what effect this might have on cabinet dispositions. It marks, too, another gentle break with Thatcherism.

Mrs Thatcher had no taste for fiddling with the shape of Whitehall. She did offer to upgrade the Ministry of Agriculture to a department when she recalled Peter Walker to put him in charge, but he waived the chance of being a secretary of state. Generally Mrs Thatcher saw the creation of super-departments in Edward Heath's day as something which diverted ministers from policy implementation.

By contrast, John Major has been studying the question for months, reckoning that after 11 years with no changes save the splitting of the SS from DHSS, changes are needed to ensure that Whitehall delivers a better service.

Few in the cabinet expect the Department of Energy to survive long into the next parliament, although John Wakeham, the energy secretary, is anxious to keep together the privatisation expertise of a key group of civil servants. That can be done just as easily, it is argued, in a revamped Department of Trade and Industry with separate ministers of state for industry, trade and energy.

The Department of Education casts covetous eyes on the employment department's training role; its benefit functions would be a natural fit with the Department of Social Security; and its role in tourism and small firms are a relic of the days when Lord Young of Graffham swung around Whitehall acquiring random responsibility. Michael Howard has de-



By ROBIN OAKLEY

veloped political clout at employment. But in doing so he has underlined how the employment secretary's job leaves plenty of time for pure politics now that Acas ensures it is no longer the beer and sandwiches department of industrial negotiations.

Peter Lilley, as trade secretary, argues forcibly that employment's training functions should escape the clutches of the education department and come to DTI.

The problem is that too many roads are leading to the DTI, threatening the creation of a mammoth department.

The old argument about the closeness of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to the land and sea industries' producers has been weakened somewhat as the farming lobbies rally at the supposedly tough deal they are now getting. But although some still argue that the farmers could be treated along with the rest of industry by the DTI while MAFF's environmental and planning functions go to employment, that option has been ruled out.



Heseltine: due for cabinet promotion

Talk of having a separate minister for Europe in the cabinet is clearly subsiding as departmental ministers fear delegation of matters they would like to keep in their own hands. And there is pressure from Lord Waddington for another cabinet minister in the Lords.

There must be promotion after the election, it is agreed, for Michael Heseltine. Kenneth Clarke is now a figure of serious weight in the cabinet and reckoned to be in line for one of the big three jobs. If the election is won there must be a front-line job for party chairman Chris Patten. And Michael Howard and David Mellor have established their claims for promotion. But where are they all to be accommodated, especially if the prime minister feels that he cannot go through his first reshuffle without putting a woman in the cabinet?

Since the law permits only 21 to be paid as cabinet ministers, that leaves two vacancies. Douglas Hurd is reckoned to be immovable so long as he wants to go on as foreign secretary. Many colleagues feel that Norman Lamont, having taken the heat for all of them these past three months, would be entitled to a spell as peacetime chancellor.

Michael Heseltine refused the chance of the Home Office once before and Chris Patten's appointment to that role might unsettle the right. So a reluctant Kenneth Clarke might well inherit that crown of thorns with Mr Patten taking on education, while the revamping of the DTI could make it an attractive enough post for Mr Heseltine. The snag is that if the energy and employment departments were to be dismantled, there would be two fewer cabinet posts to bestow.

Division shows Sunday solidarity

LABOUR backbenchers yesterday staged a division against a bill introduced by one of their number in an attempt to show overwhelming Commons support for tightening and clarifying the law on Sunday trading (Robert Morgan writes).

Ray Powell, Labour MP for Ogmire, who is sponsored by Usdaw, the shop workers' union, had presented his

Shops (Amendment) Bill under the ten-minute rule without a voice raised against it. But a group of Labour MPs forced a division and it was brought in by 224 votes to 4. Bruce Grocott, Labour MP for The Wrekin, said that as the vote showed overwhelming support for the bill the government should bring in legislation immediately.

Under the measure, which

Mr Powell said had support from all the churches, as well as trade unions, the Keep Sunday Special Campaign and many retailers, only designated shops would be allowed to open on Sunday. He said that a small group of big companies were changing the British way of life.

The bill has no chance of being debated again before the election.

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Breath of fresh air to revive stuffy pyramid

MODERN air conditioning might soon be fitted to the Great Pyramid at Giza, the only surviving wonder of the ancient world, to remove stale and humid air caused by the millions of visitors.

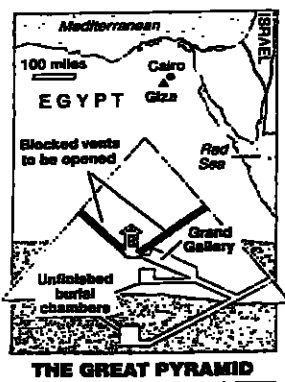
The idea is being studied by a team of archaeologists and engineers at the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo, following concern that the pyramid was becoming inhospitable for tourists. Zahi Hawass, director-general of antiquities for the pyramids area, said: "Nobody has done anything about this air since Cheops' time, 4,500 years ago, and it is getting to be a real problem."

Before the Gulf war, two million visitors went to Egypt and most clambered into the pyramid, but many complained of shortness of breath, eye irritations and claustrophobia caused by the heat, perspiration and poor ventilation in the cramped burial chamber. The difficulties are likely to become insurmountable by 1995, when the number of visitors to Egypt is expected to rise to a five million.

Studies carried out over recent weeks have discovered

The 4,500-year-old air in Cheops' tomb is taking its toll on tourists. Nick Nuttall reports

that the two curious channels, some 9in or 1ft in diameter, leading from the king's chamber to the exterior of the pyramid have become blocked by dust, sand and perhaps stones. The channels, emerging to the north and south, were almost certainly built to allow the pharaoh's spirit to escape to the stars. Egyptologists now believe. Two other channels originate in the so-called "queen's chamber" below.



but are thought to end before reaching the outer wall.

Eiddon Edwards, the leading authority on the pyramids and a former keeper of Egyptian antiquities at the British Museum in London, said: "The north one was directed on the circumpolar stars where, according to one belief, the king was supposed to spend part of the next life. The southern one was directed on the constellation of Orion, and that again was thought to be a desirable residence."

Under the institute's plan, long brushes will be forced up the vents from the burial chamber to clear the debris in March. Rainer Stadelmann, director of the institute, said that it was then proposed to fit a mechanical ventilation system in the south channel to bring in fresh air from the northern channel and the main entrance. Dr Edwards welcomed the scheme: "The Great Pyramid is very stuffy, it always has been. What they are proposing would seem sensible. The wind in Egypt almost invariably blows from the north, so it would make a great deal of sense to take air in from the northern channel."



Well versed: the poet Roger McGough taking a workshop at Newstead Wood School for girls, in Orpington, Kent. Eighteen pupils aged 14 to 17 were chosen to work with him yesterday in preparation for a poetry evening. Mr McGough, who read in public for the first time some poems he wrote last week, said: "I was delighted with their

response. I think they quite liked the idea that I was trying new work out on them. It let them see the craft involved in writing poetry." The girls wrote their own poems in the afternoon then discussed them with Mr McGough, who will join them in performing a mixture of his work and theirs at the school later this year.

Card is key to locking out car thieves

By KEVIN EASON
MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

ENGINEERS at Ford are developing an anti-theft lock system operated by a "smart card" which could be available on its cars in two years.

With car crimes running at a million a year, Britain's biggest car maker has told its engineers at the Dunton research centre in Essex to develop new ways of outsmarting criminals. The company already fits deadlocks to its models but high performance cars, such as the 150mph Sierra Cosworth, are as much a target for professional criminals as for joyriders.

Engineers have come up with a solution which would give Ford owners a card, similar to a bank cashpoint card. After the door is opened, the car will not start until the card is inserted and a personal identification number punched into the dashboard controls.

Ian McAllister, chairman of Ford of Britain, admitted that the development was a response to the changing climate of opinion against high-performance cars. About one in ten Fiestas and Escorts sold are high-performance models, capable of up to 130mph, and more are planned.

But insurers say that such cars are up to five times more likely to be stolen than ordinary saloons, and premiums have been raised by as much as 80 per cent this year for owners of the cars most at risk. A Ford Escort XR3i is classified in insurance group 13 by the Association of British Insurers. An Escort 1.4LX, on which the high-performance model is based, is in group five.

Mr McAllister said that the smart card system could be available on Ford's high-performance range in two years and on all the company's models shortly after that. Similar systems are already available but cost £200 or more. Ford's system will be built into the car with the controlling micro-chip manufactured as part of the engine management computer. A second key could be used, but engineers favour the smart card as easier to use and more acceptable to drivers.

Mr McAllister said: "Clearly a system which adds £200 to the cost of a car which already has an alarm and deadlocks is too expensive. We are working on ways to build the whole system into the vehicle, but we have to put more power into the engine management computer. "Clearly, a development like this is a response to the changing situation. We want owners of Ford cars to feel as secure as possible and this system, operated either by a smart card or second personal key, would offer an ingenious answer."

Voyage of discovery sets off

Cape Canaveral: The US shuttle Discovery was launched carrying seven astronauts, including a Canadian woman, on a week-long research mission. The crew will conduct about 55 physics and biology experiments in the \$1bn European-built research laboratory.

Old tricks

Nottingham: At the age of 86, magician Tom Goodband has been given a statuette on becoming the first person to reach 50 years with the Guild of Magicians.

Young reading

Paris: Bane on, the sale to minors of Henry Miller's *Sexus*, the first volume of his trilogy, *The Rosy Crucifixion*, and two books by the Marquis de Sade have been lifted. (AFP)

Slow justice

Detroit: After a nine-year trial, a court sentenced Mo'at Ahmed to six months jail and a \$10 fine for breaking his wife's nose. (AP)

Herbal cure

Peking: Chinese doctors have developed herbal and acupuncture therapy to help drug addicts.

No laughing

Manchester: Winnie Mandela's name was removed from a Manchester Polytechnic building named after her but student demands to re-name it The Bruce Forsyth Building have been refused.

Old rivals receive joint peace prize

President de Klerk of South Africa and Nelson Mandela, the African National Congress leader, will be in Paris on February 3 to receive Unesco's Felix Houphouët-Boigny peace prize. The \$80,000 prize in the name of the Ivory Coast president has been awarded to them by an international jury headed by Henry Kissinger, the former US Secretary of State.

commentator" by Queen's University in Belfast.

□

Billy Idol, the British rock star, has admitted at a Beverly Hills court to hitting a woman he met in a restaurant. Idol, aged 36, whose real name is William Broad, faces a maximum sentence of six months imprisonment.

□

Turkmenistan has invited President Rafsanjani of Iran to pay a formal visit. The president, who is keen to build ties with Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union, is expected to accept.

□

Burglars stole paintings, silverware and porcelain worth \$80,000 from Sir Peter Emery, the Conservative MP for Hove, when they raided his Axminster, Devon, home.

□

Edward Hardwicke, the actor who plays Dr Watson in the TV series *Sherlock Holmes*, has been brought up to date with methods of criminal investigation. He narrates *Murder Squad*, starting next month, in which film crews shadowed Metropolitan Police murder squads.

□

John Cole, the BBC's Ulster-born political editor, is to be given an honorary degree "for distinction as a political

John McCarthy, the former hostage in Lebanon, is to be best man at the August wedding of Chris Pearson, a television producer, who was president of the Friends of John McCarthy. They first met at Hull university in 1976. Mr Pearson's fiancée is Vicky Gillette.

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Fundamentalist leader arrested

Algiers regime curbs mosque politics

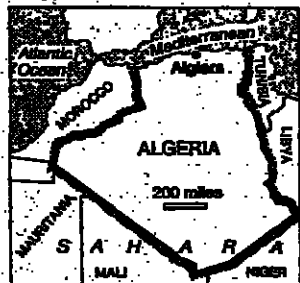
FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN ALGIERS

THE leader of Algeria's Muslim fundamentalist party, Abdelkader Hachani, was arrested yesterday as the government announced that all assembly around mosques had been banned, the official state radio reported.

The Islamic Salvation Front said that Mr Hachani, its acting president, had been arrested in Beniara, a suburb of Algiers and a party stronghold. Mr Hachani was with three other people at the time of his arrest, the party said. The others were released. Mr Hachani's whereabouts were not known, the party said.

The Muslim leader, aged 36, has been serving as head of the party since the arrest last June of two party leaders, Abassi Madani and Ali Belhaj, in a government crackdown. He presided over the sweeping gains made by the fundamentalists during first-round voting for parliament, the first free national elections since Algerian independence from France in 1962.

The arrest has been anticipated for several days. On Friday, the salvation front announced that 500 people had been arrested since the military-backed government took over on January 12. In a weekend interview, Mr Hachani said that he would not resist arrest. "If they take me, I'll go with them," he said.



But they will bear the responsibility before the people.

Mr Hachani, a former petrochemical engineer with the state-run oil company, Sonatrach, and a teacher at the Algerian Institute for Petroleum, is considered a moderate among fundamentalists. About the time he was arrested, the government announced that it was banning all public assembly around mosques.

"All gatherings around mosques are officially forbidden, no matter what the day or hour," the prefecture of Algiers said. The ban came two days before Friday prayers, the traditional political forum for the salvation front, and undermines the ability of the party to organise opposition activities. Since being recognised as a legal party in 1989, mosques have been the primary place for party leaders to garner support, demon-

strate the party's strength and spread its message.

The prefecture statement said that all pavements, streets, squares and other public spaces around mosques "are reserved exclusively for circulation". The move by the new military-backed rulers to diminish the influence and power of the Muslim radicals seemed certain to increase tensions.

The salvation front called on the army on Tuesday to "rid the people" of the authorities now in power. The full cabinet met yesterday for the first time since the military forced President Chadli Benjedid to resign on January 11 and cancelled run-off elections that would have given the salvation front control of parliament. The ban led the agenda of the cabinet meeting presided over by Muhammad Boudiaf, leader of the high security council.

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Crash survivor: Romain Duclos, aged nine, recovering in a Strasbourg hospital yesterday

Pilots chatted as disaster neared

FROM SEAN MAC CARTHAIGH IN PARIS AND HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

CONVERSATION in the cockpit of the fated Air Inter A320 was completely normal, with pilots clearly having no idea they were about to smash into the side of a mountain, first indications from one of the aircraft's black-box recorders showed yesterday. Eighty-seven people were killed when the airliner crashed outside Barr, near Strasbourg, on Monday evening. Only nine passengers survived.

"A preliminary run-through of the cabin tape shows just ordinary exchanges," Pierre-Henri Gourgeon, the director of France's Civil Aviation Authority, said yesterday.

Investigators who listened to the tapes of the pilots' conversations in the last few moments believe that they were either convinced they were near Strasbourg than they actually were and began their final approach too early, or that they had descended much earlier and were flying deliberately low, forgetting that there were mountains in their path.

Mr Gourgeon said the second, more important black

box, which records flight data, was burned for a long period after the crash, and was badly damaged. Investigators may retrieve some flight information from a third, less sophisticated recorder, installed by the airline on many of its planes. The machine, known as the QAR, may explain why the aircraft was flying at such a low altitude.

In the absence of any indication as to the cause of the accident there was no reason for the moment for his authority to suspend the use of the A320, Mr Gourgeon said.

Sean Lea, a spokesman for Airbus, said the company "acknowledged the statement" by the authority and confirmed that a team of engineers from its Toulouse base had travelled to Barr to help investigators. He said Airbus would prefer not to comment on the enquiry and had not sent condolences to the families of the victims.

"That is for Air Inter to do. We clearly believe that our aircraft is absolutely perfect, but that's not what's at stake at the moment," he added.

China to join in peace talks

Peking: David Levy, Israel's foreign minister, arrived here yesterday for a visit to establish diplomatic ties. Hours after his arrival, China confirmed that it would take part in the Middle East peace talks in Russia next week.

It will be the first time that Peking has participated in the negotiations. (Reuters)

Tear gas attack

Brazzaville: Troops fired tear gas in a vain effort to disperse crowds of pro-democracy protesters who escorted André Milongo, the prime minister, to a meeting to discuss the army's bid to oust him. (AP)

Burial claim

Baghdad: The Iraqi newspaper, al-Jumhuriya, has reported that a mass grave, filled with the bodies of Iraqi soldiers who were buried alive by allied troops during the Gulf war, has been discovered in southern Iraq. (AFP)

Up in smoke

Jebel Ali: Dubai has burnt 12 tonnes of ivory and rhinoceros horn in a public display of compliance with the United Nations ban on their export and trading. (Reuters)

Tehran opposes UN vote

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN CAIRO

LIBYA has received backing from countries as far apart as Iran and Egypt in the Middle East over its refusal to surrender two intelligence agents accused by the United Nations of causing the Lockerbie crash in 1988.

Yesterday, Iran criticised a UN resolution calling for them to be handed over. Tehran Radio claimed it reflected American influence and a rejection of Libyan offers to resolve the matter through international arbitration.

"There can be no doubt about the need to combat the phenomenon of terrorism in all its guises," the radio said. "But the fight against terrorism should not be selective: international laws should not be ignored and the sovereign rights of countries should not be violated under the guise of combating terrorism."

On the eve of the UN vote, all Egyptian political parties, including the ruling National Democratic party, and a meeting of the Egyptian-dominated Union of Arab Lawyers, expressed solidarity with Libya. Egypt has seen a rapid improvement in ties with Libya since diplomatic relations were restored in 1989 after a 13-year break, and considerable popular hostility is expected to any attempt to impose selective sanctions, as suggested by Western diplomats, if the two agents were not handed over.

Atom cargo for Libya is seized

FROM IAN MURRAY IN BONN

AMERICAN-MADE atomic-programme equipment, bound for Libya, has been seized by German customs at Frankfurt airport acting on information from secret service agents. The shipment was on board an aircraft already cleared for take-off when the pilot was ordered to return to the loading bay.

The seizure was made on December 10 last year, but an announcement was withheld pending enquiries in the United States. Investigators are still seeking evidence of other possible shipments.

The blocked consignment, including laser equipment and a range of items capable of being used for military or civilian purposes, was being sent to an office in Libya which, German experts say, is known to be a procurement agency for the Libyan missile programme. The items had been obtained from an American manufacturer by a Dutch company, which had then forwarded them through Frankfurt to Tripoli. The United States asked Germany to intervene after Dutch authorities said they lacked the necessary legal powers.

Dieter Vogel, the Bonn government spokesman, said the cabinet had been forced to block shipments of such equipment to Libya because the Bundestag has so far failed to pass a draft law limiting exports of this kind.

Hollywood crew goes to the Haj

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER

For the first time in the history of Tinseltown, a Hollywood film crew has been inside Mecca and permitted by the Saudi authorities to film the Haj, the annual pilgrimage to Islam's holiest city. The move has surprised many diplomatic observers in the Middle East, conscious of official Saudi antagonism to Western values. It is seen as an attempt to popularise the image of Islam when it is under attack from many quarters.

Spike Lee, the black film director, disclosed that the remarkable dispensation had been granted to a crew working on his US\$25 million Warner Brothers account of the life of the black activist Malcolm X, assassinated in 1965.

Normally, Mecca and the second holiest Muslim shrine of Medina are closed to all outsiders, with Christians rigidly barred. The film crew were all Muslims, but Lee angrily denied that any of

them had converted for the occasion, as reported in the Egyptian press.

"It was the first time Hollywood has been allowed into Mecca," Lee told the American cultural institute in Cairo. "I do not think Hollywood would ever have treated Islam the way we will treat it in this film."

The Saudis could hardly have picked a more controversial Muslim than Malcolm X for Mecca's celluloid debut. As Detroit Red, he was a pimp and drug pedlar who turned to the black Muslims while in jail and became a minister and prophet of black pride.

After performing his own Haj in 1964, Malcolm X split from the black Muslims and embraced a more orthodox and global view of Islam, rejecting his previously held belief that whites were inherently evil. He was gunned down soon after by assassins in New York's Audubon ballroom while giving a speech.

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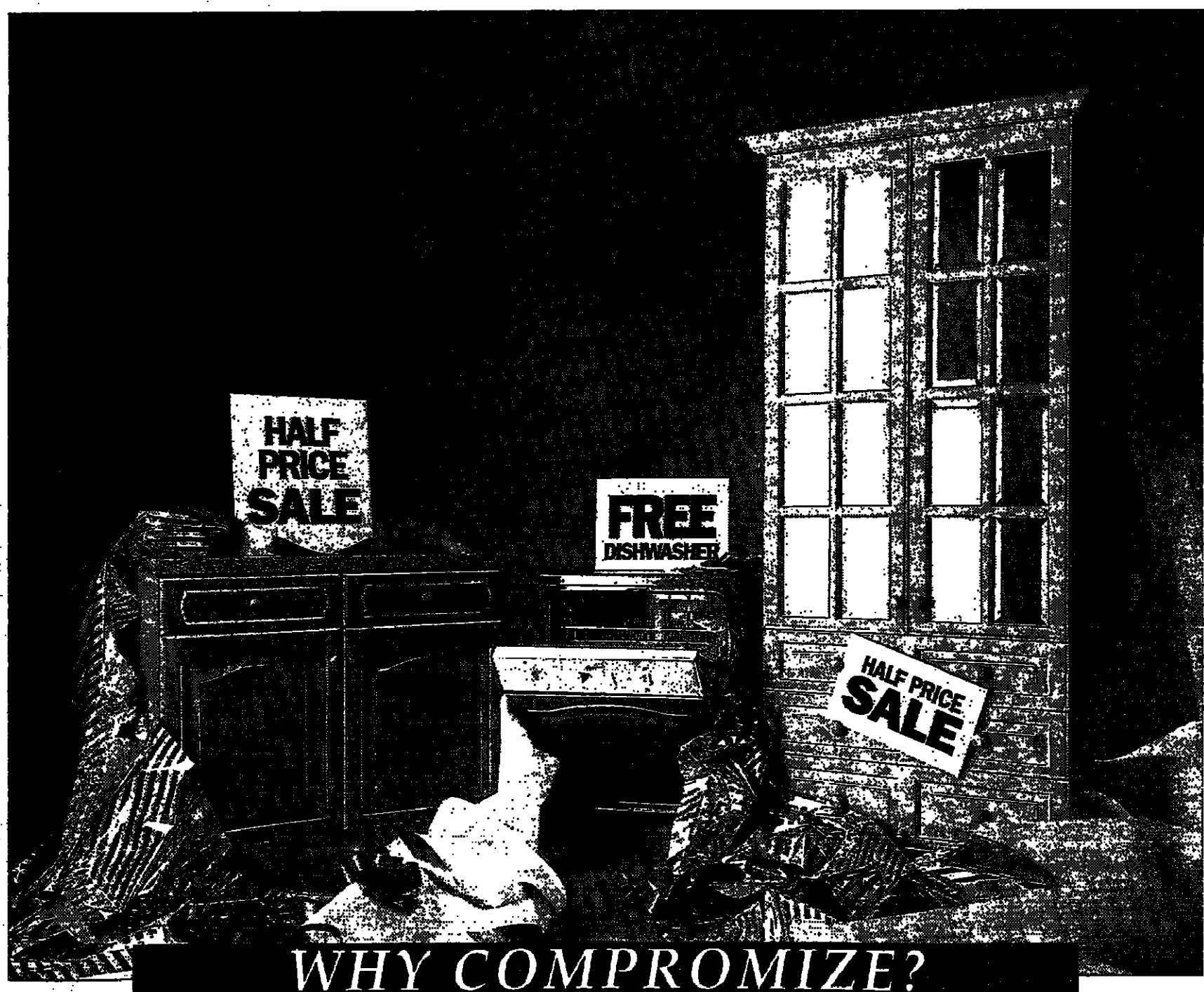
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America stirs Old World animosities in aid tussle



Mitterrand: will not bow to Washington

JUST below the surface of the Washington conference on aid to the former Soviet Union, strains are appearing between Europe and America which have not been felt for more than a decade.

James Baker, the American Secretary of State, put European Community noses badly out of joint by summoning them to co-ordinate international efforts to help the new Commonwealth of Independent States. France has declined to send its foreign minister, dispatching a junior minister instead.

The Portuguese government, now in the EC chair, lobbied this week for the Community to speak immediately after Mr Baker, but appeared only partly mollified by winning that privilege, and by a second speaking slot yesterday. "This is better than it was, even though it is not exactly what the Community deserves," a spokesman said.

Strains are emerging between the Community and the US over the Soviet aid conference and Gatt talks, George Brock writes from Brussels

What several European governments think that the EC deserves is the leadership of this international effort. Europe is putting up the bulk of the money for the peaceful dismantling of the Soviet empire. European diplomats say, yet America is still running the show.

The uncomfortable truth is that Europe alone could not cope with the massive relief effort which may now be needed. The resources of Nato, underpinned by American forces, are now needed to ferry food eastwards. The French government is still campaigning against this "American-dominated" scheme.

But these rows are petty jealousies compared to the mounting tensions over the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade talks, which have been deadlocked for nearly a year by transatlantic disagreements over farm subsidies. Efforts are under way to patch up a settlement before Easter, but the five-year negotiation is already entangled in rows over trade and protectionism in the American presidential election campaign.

"I will not let American agriculture disarm unilaterally," President Bush told a recent gathering of disgruntled farmers. "Sooner or later the EC must stop hiding behind its own iron curtain of protectionism."

Open challenges in that kind of language, which Mr Bush avoided using throughout last year, signal that for the White House re-election is now more important than the trade talks. French politicians, defensive about agriculture and always the most sensitive to American pressure, responded to Mr Bush in kind. "France is not ready to bow to American demands, nor to submit to the interests of any country, and will not give way," said President Mitterrand.

Few EC governments believe the case for the Common Agricultural Policy is as good as the French think. But so far John Major has been unable to persuade Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, to use his weight to break French opposition to a world trade deal.

Such a deal might boost the world economy out of recession but the price would be paid by the smallholders of France and Germany. "Now is an unfavourable moment to go against France," one German commentator said recently.

There are many problems with the Franco-German relationship.

America has stood on the sidelines as the EC has taken the leading role in Yugoslavia and over trade and aid arrangements in Eastern Europe. But the stakes are higher over helping the former Soviet republics and over new rules for world trade. James Dobbin, the new American ambassador to the EC, said this week that failure in the Gatt talks "could begin to erode the core relationship between the United States and Western Europe upon which any broader vision of co-operation is based".

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EC shelves idea for meat auctions in Russia

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

AS SENIOR Western officials met in Washington to discuss the co-ordination of aid to the former Soviet Union, the first convoys of Western lorries, travelling under police escort, arrived in central Moscow to deliver butter and meat to the city's cold stores. The food is part of an emergency aid effort for Moscow and St Petersburg initiated by the European Community.

Yesterday also saw the first distribution of British beef in the Arctic city of Murmansk. The beef, which was rejected in Moscow because of Russian regulations on BSE, the "mad cow disease", had been held in city warehouses since its arrival three weeks ago. It is now being distributed to the city's 100,000 children free of charge, 21p per child.

The EC emergency aid programme, which aims to supply 200 million euro (£142 million) worth of food to Russia's two biggest cities before the end of March, is cautiously being judged a success. But this does not mean that there are no difficulties. The head of the European Commission office in Moscow, Michael Emerson, said yesterday that the idea of auctioning large quantities of butter and meat

had been postponed. The Commission was now setting the wholesale price, in co-ordination with the two city authorities.

This is a setback for the programme whose purpose is not only to provide food for a poorly supplied market, but to try to form and then help to stabilise that market. The original intention was that much of the food would be sold at auction to wholesalers and shop managers and that the auctions would help determine a realistic market price for such goods.

Yesterday, Mr Emerson said that auctions would take too long to arrange and that there were many rules and regulations that had to be observed. He hinted, but would not confirm, that the idea had met resistance from potential competitors in the incipient commodity exchanges. Now, the Commission has set a fixed price of 50 roubles per kilo for meat and 56 roubles for butter (£0.62 and £0.70 pence respectively at the tourist rate of exchange in Moscow). The first sales began last Sunday — the proceeds are earmarked for social programmes — and the butter is now being sold at 23 shops in northern Moscow.

Here, too, however, not all is running smoothly. Mr Emerson admitted to a few teething problems which included some profiteering by shop managers.

The Commission defends the notion of food sales, first on the ground that it is deliberate intervention in a non-existent market in an attempt to limit speculation in scarce domestic production and, second, to avoid the experience of last year when much foreign food aid was diverted to the black market. If it is going to be sold, their argument runs, it is better that the profits be controlled and used for social support rather than filling the pockets of speculators.

Tokyo: Japan is hiring scientists from the former Soviet Union, including nuclear researchers, but is keeping a low-profile to avoid head-hunting accusations, according to reports here. (AFP)

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Moscow in drive to sell arms

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

MOSCOW is engaged in an "aggressive campaign" to market its technologically most advanced weaponry to boost desperately needed export earnings, according to an unclassified Nato report.

However, the volume of arms deliveries by the former Soviet Union to less developed countries has dropped by 50 per cent since 1987 and the decline is expected to accelerate, the report by the Nato economic committee said. There had been some significant currency-earning sales, including two squadrons of Su27 Flanker fighter aircraft to China. The latest fighter aircraft design, the multirole Su37, was already on offer, even though it would not be available for five years.

Efforts to sell to traditional customers outside the Soviet bloc, such as the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia and Thailand, showed no sign of generating exports, particularly in the wake of the defeat of the Soviet-armed Iraqi forces, according to Soviet Economic Performance in 1991, a *Weak Foundation for a New Political Beginning*. The decline in arms exports and a cut in domestic defence procurement had begun to disrupt some weapons programmes even before the failed coup last August. Now, many defence industrial plants were suffering "severe cash flow problems because of falling military orders".

Attempts to convert part of the defence industry to civilian production had also fallen short of the planned goals.

● Kuwait accord: Britain and Kuwait are to sign a defence pact during a visit to London by the emirate's defence minister next month, Tom King, the defence secretary, said yesterday. Contracts would be worth about £100 million, according to British sources.



Pistful of roubles: a bank official in Moscow displaying the new 500-rouble note yesterday, which is to be issued in response to the steep rise in prices. The highest denomination previously was 200 roubles

Armenian rebels 'hold generals'

BY BRUCE CLARK IN SUKHUMI
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

A GROUP of Armenian fighters was reported yesterday to have captured two Russian commanders and held them to ransom against the military hardware they were taking out of the republic. The report underlines the risks attending the withdrawal of former Soviet forces from the troubled region of the Transcaucasus.

The Interfax news agency said the commander of the Transcaucasus military district, Colonel-General Valeri Patrikeyev, and the commander of the Seventh army, Major-General Meshcheryakov, were captured at Yerevan airport on Tuesday night. Their captors were said to have demanded the return to the republic of 14 MiG24 helicopters.

The details of the story, but not its substance, were subsequently denied by General Patrikeyev. Contacted by the Tass news agency by telephone, he said that he had arrived in Yerevan from the Georgian capital, Tbilisi, on Tuesday to report to the Armenian president on Friday's conference of army officers in Moscow.

"Other problems were also discussed," he said. "The leadership of the republic in particular posed the question of the return to Armenia of helicopters which had been transferred long before to other regions for various reasons, including repairs." He said that General Meshcheryakov was fulfilling his normal duties.

Members of the former Soviet high command have said on several occasions that regular troops would be withdrawn from the Transcaucasus if the security situation worsened, and a withdrawal of central forces from the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh (predominantly Armenian but administered by Azerbaijan) was completed earlier this month.

Troops remain in other parts of the three republics, although they have maintained neutrality in Georgia's civil war. Whatever the truth of the Armenian episode, it shows the republics may be happy to see the back of the former Soviet troops, but may fight to keep the hardware.



Rita puts Tass staff in a spin

BY MARY DEJEVSKY

STAFF at two of the former Soviet Union's most entrenched media outlets — the Tass and Novosti news agencies — were up in arms last night after publication of a decree amalgamating them into a single Russian agency. The decree, signed by Boris Yeltsin, the Russian president, yesterday, said that the new agency would be called Rita — the Russian Information Telegraph Agency.

Mikhail Poltoranin, Russia's minister of information, said the new agency was operating using the current Tass lines. He told the media committee of the Russian parliament that the agency would be under the jurisdiction of the Russian government. He said the present director of Tass, Vitali Ignatenko, would not be nominated for the new post. Mr Ignatenko was Mr Gorbachev's chief spokesman until last September.

The parliament's media committee has objected to the new arrangements, and sent a formal request to Mr Yeltsin to postpone the implementation. The position of Tass, never a wholehearted supporter of reform, has been complicated several times since August. As the official news agency, it was used to transmit the first official declarations of the emergency coup committee, and despite valiant resistance by some of its editors, who in-

creasingly transmitted material showing the breadth of Russian resistance, its reputation was never completely salvaged.

Even the subsequent appointment of Mr Ignatenko, a known reformist, as director and its transfer to independent status were not enough to save an agency so closely associated with all the Soviet Union's old regimes. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union after Mr Gorbachev's resignation in December, the agency was further handicapped by its title — Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union. This was subtly altered to read: Telegraph Agency of the Countries of the Commonwealth.

Terror of history, page 16



Ignatenko, ruled out for a new post

Germany heads for steel strike

FROM IAN MURRAY
IN BONN

THE most powerful trade union in Germany was on course yesterday for the first strike in the German steel industry for nearly a decade after a marathon last round of pay talks collapsed.

The engineering union and employers both said they would rather face a stoppage than make further concessions.

Helmut Kohl, the chancellor, backed the stand by the employers when he said "reasonable" wage settlements were essential to bring down inflation and stabilise the German economy, in which any weaknesses were due to developments in the world economy.

He told foreign journalists that there was no recession tendency in Germany's development "as long as we are reasonable with wage settlements". Inflation is currently at 4.2 per cent, which he described as unacceptable.

"We cannot have inflation rates at these levels," he said. "We must get back to our old levels, and the sooner the better. I think with reasonable wage settlements this will work."

The high cost of unification lies behind the unusually tough stance of both sides. The union, which has four million members, says wage earners have had to pay more than their fair share for the restructuring of the East through an income tax surcharge and extra value-added tax on cigarettes, heating fuel and petrol.

Employers insist that meeting the claim will start a wage spiral which will fire inflation and lead to recession.

On the face of it, the sides were not far apart when the steel negotiations broke down after 14 hours. The union, IG Metall, said it was ready to drop its 10.5 per cent claim to a package costing no more than 6.15 per cent.

The employers had raised their offer from 4.9 per cent to 5.7 per cent. But neither side was prepared to go any further, and the union will ballot its members on Sunday, confident that it will get the 75 per cent support needed to call a strike.

● London: Fears about labour unrest softened the mark on the foreign exchange markets, but trading was generally subdued, with investors displaying caution ahead of the Group of Seven finance ministers meeting in Washington next weekend, at which currencies are expected to be an important topic.

Croatia urges pressure on Serbia

Zagreb: Leaders of Croatia, one third of which is in the hands of Serb-led forces, have urged the international community to force Serbia to "capitulate" and to help disarm the Yugoslav army.

Despite minor incidents, the latest ceasefire — the 15th in the seven-month war — appeared to be holding for a 20th day. Federal and Croatian military leaders, who are striving to strengthen the truce and pave the way for the deployment of United Nations peacekeepers, failed to agree on terms for the army's withdrawal from Croatia, officials said.

The talks, held in the southern Hungarian city of Pecs, broke down over whether the federal army should pull out of the parts of Croatia where no presence of UN peacekeepers is planned. But both sides at the seven-hour talks agreed to uphold and extend the latest truce. (AP)

Austria alert

Vienna: President Waldheim, shunned internationally because of his wartime role in the German army, has spoken out against a wave of neo-Nazi activity in Austria. He said that it was necessary to be on constant guard against destructive powers. (Reuters)

Deadly cost

Moscow: Price rises have led to an increase in suicides in Lenin's native town of Ulyanovsk, Tass reported, based on Russian interior ministry information. The news agency said the suicides reflected falling living standards among the poor. (Reuters)

Guilty secret

Bangkok: Stephen Harris, a Briton accused of possessing 7lb of heroin, has changed his plea to guilty after telling a Thai court that his lawyer had told him to plead not guilty, then demanded extortionate fees to defend him. He faces life imprisonment. (Reuters)

Colony plea

Hong Kong: The legislative council voted 22 votes to 21 not to criticise London for announcing the retirement of the governor, Sir David Wilson, without appointing a successor, but asked it to take local views into account when making a decision. (AFP)

Vatican talks

Rome: The Pope has welcomed news that Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox churches are to restart talks next month. They broke down last October over the role of the Ukrainian Catholic church, which owes allegiance to the Pope. (Reuters)

Testing time

Seoul: President Roh Tae Woo of South Korea replaced his education minister after outrage over the theft of nationwide college entrance test papers. Cho Wan Kyoo, the former president of Seoul National University, succeeds Yoon Hyoung Sup. (Reuters)

Markov action

Sofia: General Vlado Todorov, the former Bulgarian intelligence chief who faces charges in the case of Georgi Markov, the dissident writer killed with a poisoned umbrella tip in London in 1978, has been put under house arrest, his lawyers said. (AFP)

Shark swoop

Sydney: Australian police helicopters swooped low and one officer opened fire with a pistol to try to scare sharks swimming near surfers off Manly beach, back out to sea. Their efforts were only partially successful as the sharks later returned. (AFP)

Snooping machine creaks on in Eastern Europe

The communist ideology may have melted away but the domestic spy networks it spawned have a life of their own, Roger Boyes reports

from the police establishment. The fact is that the secret police was not a rotten tooth fit for extraction when communism fell: spying and informing were part of life, a job that helped to feed thousands of families, reaching every corner of society. The fear of these spies is evaporating, but the agents carry on filing reports chronicling indiscretions and affairs. Not much is done about this information nowadays, yet it is difficult to stop the machine or change its course.

Elena lives in a cramped apartment in central Sofia, full of children and drying blouses. In 1970 she was a promising student of English and with a dozen others

was allowed to study for six months in London. The Bulgarian secret police made it plain that a condition of the trip was that she report on her classmates. She agreed. Unknown to her, at least three other members of the group were also informers. After graduation, the secret police asked Elena to meet an English businessman in Sofia and become his friend. This time she refused — and her world collapsed. She was forced to become a primary school teacher in a village and even there she was spied upon. She married another teacher and after a while found that he, too, was reporting on her. When communist rule ended in 1990, she re-



GED

turned to Sofia but soon after applying for a post, somebody — perhaps one of the original English study group — denounced her as a spy. Now she translates English thrillers.

In Bulgaria, as in Czechoslovakia, East Germany and Poland, many faculties were targeted: law, philosophy, theology, journalism. In Czechoslovakia, the secret police tried to recruit Leon Richter, a law student. He

refused and against the odds managed to prosper, mainly because, as a judge, he rigorously enforced the law. In one case he jailed for three years a farmer who had been hoarding food. Trying to escape the moral dilemma of a lawyer applying unjust laws, he became involved in the 1968 reform movement, was sacked and became unemployed until the "velvet revolution" when he emerged as the new justice minister. Now, as every professional biography is to be minutely examined, he has resigned.

Secret police files do not have historical accuracy as Bedrich Moldan, the Czechoslovak environment minister, found out: wrongly accused of being a police collaborator, he resigned and by the time the errors had been discovered, his career was destroyed. Excavating history, as written by the secret police, is a painful process. Many

Westerners have to make compromises in their careers — for instance, choosing unloved but better-paid jobs, or low-paid jobs that give them more time at home or having to break shop-floor solidarity by currying favour with the boss. In the East, the choices were more formidable and there was little or no moral equipment to cope. The opening of the Stasi files is fracturing lives and destroying memories. Tino Schwierzina, the last mayor of East Berlin, has just established that his best friend had betrayed him for many years: "I've just looked through my files — I realise now that my friend was stealing papers and copying phone numbers."

The queues in Berlin, opposite the Komische Oper, waiting for a glimpse of their files, reveal more than the evils of totalitarian society.

Right pushes Bush for tax cuts

Abortion issue adds to president's woes

FROM PETER STOTHARD, US EDITOR, IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Bush is facing a double conservative threat to his presidency, from rebellious Republican congressmen who want deep tax cuts from next week's State of the Union message and from the Supreme Court which decided on Tuesday to reopen issues of legalised abortion in the middle of this year's election campaign.

The economic battle between moderates and conservatives is awkward for Mr Bush as he takes on the challenge of the conservative commentator Patrick Buchanan in New Hampshire. Top advisers at the White House believe the president's problems lie more in image than substance. Mr Buchanan, an increasingly restless group of conservative senators, disagree.

The abortion issue is more than awkward; it is potentially devastating. To the dismay of Republican strategists, who had hoped for a delay, the Supreme Court has agreed this summer to review a Pennsylvania law which undermines the constitutional right to abortion granted by the Roe v Wade decision of 1973.

It would require parental consent for minors, a 24-hour waiting period between a consultation and abortion, and full information for women about the development of an about-to-be-aborted foetus. The decision of the court, whose new conservative majority is likely to back restrictions on abortion rights, is expected in July.

Although Mr Bush is on



Buchanan: implacable opponent of abortion

record as opposing the constitutional right to abortion contained in Roe v Wade. Republicans fear that the imminent restriction of abortion could drive large numbers of women voters into the Democrat camp. All the Democrat challengers support Roe v Wade, whose 19th anniversary was greeted by demonstrations of support and protest in many parts of the US this week.

The court has said that its review would be restricted to the specific aspects of the Pennsylvania law. It might not, therefore, be the court's long-awaited final judgment on whether abortion can be a constitutional right founded on a right to privacy.

Pro-choice campaigners argue, however, that the Pennsylvania restrictions do impinge on the Roe v Wade decision and hope to mobilise women voters to make their feelings known through the ballot box.

The Republican party is divided on abortion. Its best chance of staying together on the issue is for other concerns to predominate. The conservative wing has approved President Bush's Supreme Court choices, David Souter and Clarence Thomas, but finds it easier to mobilise national support against Roe v Wade than to deal with the consequences of removing the constitutional right to abortion.

The current success of Mr Buchanan, an implacable opponent of abortion, makes it harder for Mr Bush himself to equivocate. Other cases are also working their way through the legal process, and Republican campaign managers hope that, if Roe is to be overturned, the change will come gradually through a number of judgments rather than suddenly when political tempers are already high.

White House sources reported yesterday that Mr Bush would make a formal announcement of his candidacy for 1992 in New Hampshire on February 12.

By then he will hope that his State of the Union message — expected to contain a health care plan, a modest capital gains tax proposal and other help for the beleaguered economy — will have boosted his support.



Sax appeal: Bill Clinton, governor of Arkansas and a Democratic presidential hopeful, playing in a Washington night club to raise campaign funds

Two die as execution appeals rejected

FROM REUTER IN HUNTSVILLE TEXAS

TWO Americans sentenced to death for decade-old murders were executed by lethal injection early yesterday after their appeals were rejected.

Joe Angel Cordova, aged 39, convicted of shooting a man dead during a robbery nearly ten years ago, was executed in Texas after the US Supreme Court denied him an 11th-hour stay of execution. Mark Hopkinson, aged 42, the only man on Wyoming's death row, was executed at the state prison in Rawlins for his involvement in a 1979 torture murder.

Cordova was the 43rd person executed in Texas since it reinstated the death penalty in 1982. There are 357 people on death row there. He was convicted of the shotgun killing of a man in February 1982 after he and accomplices abducted their victim from a Houston telephone booth and robbed him.

Hopkinson was sentenced for ordering the murder of Jeffrey Green, who was due to testify against him over the 1977 bombing deaths of an attorney, his wife and son. He was the first person to be executed in Wyoming for 26 years and only the 16th in the state this century. Green's killers have never been caught, and Hopkinson had maintained his innocence until the end.

Burmese troops mine border

FROM AHMED FAZI IN DHAKA

THE Burmese army has begun planting land mines in a further step to reinforce its position on the border with Bangladesh, defence sources said yesterday.

The entire 70-mile frontier with the Bandarban district of southeastern Bangladesh had been mined, they said. About eight Burmese brigades were engaged in the operation in the hilly terrain.

The state-run radio said that 3,000 Burmese Muslims had crossed the border and taken refuge in the Cox's Bazar district, boosting the Burmese refugee population in Bangladesh to 65,000 on Tuesday. It also said that two refugees were killed in a mine explosion as they crossed the border near Ali Kadam.

Bangladeshi and Burmese military commanders are due to meet next Tuesday to draw up plans to defuse the border tension. Sources in Bangladesh said that about 80,000 Burmese troops were massed on the border.

● Village polling: About 50 million voters in Bangladesh went to the polls yesterday to elect 4,400 village mayors after a month of electioneering in which at least 12 people were killed and more than 500 injured. State-run Bangladesh radio said the army had been put on a state of alert until February 6.

Hindu march raises fears of violence

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

HINDU hardliners reached the sensitive northern state of Haryana yesterday on their 8,000-mile journey from the southern tip of India to the Kashmir valley. As they did so, the cabinet committee on political affairs authorised security forces in three states to take any steps necessary to preserve law and order.

Reports from the Kashmir city of Jammu said 12,000 Hindus were waiting to join the procession, organised by the Bharatiya Janata Party. From there, the procession is due to travel to the predominantly Muslim Kashmir valley.

S. B. Chavan, the home minister, said in Delhi last night that the procession was fraught with "grave danger". He added: "If they want to risk it, I cannot help it". He claimed intelligence reports suggested that Kashmiri separatist militants had mined the route.

A government spokesman said troops had been redeployed in Punjab and reinforcements sent to Kashmir. G. C. Saxena, the governor of Kashmir, has appealed to the organisers not to enter the valley, or at least to keep the size of the procession to a minimum.

The Ekta Yatra (unity journey), which began in December, has taken a zig-zag path through the country to highlight the supposed threat to India's unity posed by Muslim separatists in Kashmir. The unspoken message has been clearly anti-Muslim, threatening another bout of religious conflict in northern regions.

The government has yet to decide whether to let the procession enter the Kashmir valley. If it came under attack from Muslim secessionists there could be violence against Muslims in the northern Hindu heartland. Hundreds died in religious riots in 1990 when the party staged a Rath Yatra (chariot journey) to highlight demands for the demolition of a mosque in the northern city of Ayodhya. This time the march has not, so far, raised the same kind of emotions.

P. V. Narasimha Rao, the prime minister, presided over meetings of the cabinet's political affairs committee on Tuesday night and yesterday morning to decide what to do if the procession turns violent. The meetings were attended by the chief minister of Haryana and the governors of Punjab and Kashmir.

Screen violence spills into foyer

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

Americans' penchant for "shoot-em-up" films is well known, but the violence is now spreading from screen to audience to such an extent that merely going to the cinema these days rates as an action-adventure.

A spate of films about the grim realities of ghetto-life has attracted a street-hardened audience who think nothing of wielding guns and knives along with their popcorn. The latest ghetto-drama to provoke trouble, *Juice*, opened in 1,098 cinemas last weekend. One teenager was killed and four others were injured in an outpouring of violence from Alaska to Arkansas.

The film, the directorial debut of Ernest Dickerson, the cinematographer of Spike Lee, the radical black director, tells the story of four youths growing up in Harlem. Its advertising slogan asks: "Power. Respect. Juice. How far will you go to get it?" Although one of the four friends turns bad, his actions are viewed through the eyes of Q, who is worried by what he

sees. Paramount, the makers, insist *Juice* has an anti-violence message.

Paramount offered to pay for extra security at cinemas showing *Juice* and made extra prints available so that cinemas could put the film on an additional screen. But such precautions did little to stop the mayhem of the opening weekend. In Chicago, a girl aged 16 was shot dead outside a cinema in a fight between rival gang-members waiting in the ticket line to see *Juice*. A boy aged 14 was charged with her murder.

In Michigan, a youth, aged 17, was shot in the leg during a brawl in a cinema lobby in which nine shots were fired. An 18-year-old from suburban Philadelphia was paralysed from the neck down when he was stuck by a bullet outside another theatre showing the film. In New York, a 16-year-old was stabbed during a fight in the stalls. In Anchorage, Alaska, an assistant theatre manager had his eye socket broken when he tried to stop a fight involving about 100 patrons.

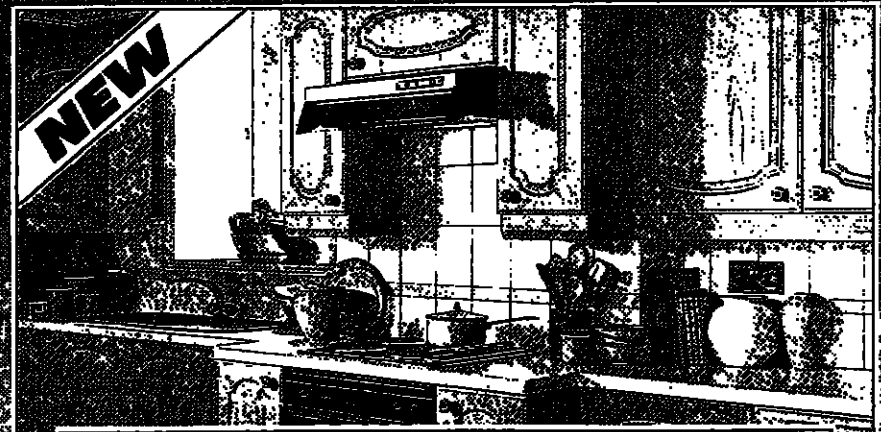
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The sun is setting on creeping desert theory

For 20 years it has been an article of faith that the world's deserts are advancing. The United Nations Environment Programme (Unep) has said that 35 per cent of the surface of the Earth is at risk and that \$26 billion worth of food production is lost every year. Hundreds of millions of pounds of aid have been spent to try to remedy the problem.

Among the worst-hit areas, Unep says, is the southern fringe of the Sahara desert, where it has been claimed that the desert is advancing at the rate of several miles a year. The Sahara is supposed to be swallowing up an area the size of New York state every ten years.

But is it true that the deserts are spreading? Some scientists have given warning that the evidence is not strong enough to justify the concern whipped up by Unep, the World Bank and the aid agencies. Now a review in *Ambio*, an environmental journal, has cast further doubt on the idea.

Nigel Hawkes reports on doubts about whether deserts really are spreading

A team at Lund University in Sweden has been studying the deserts in Sudan since the 1970s. Using satellites, ground observation and national food production statistics, they have found no evidence that long-lasting desert conditions have been created in Sudan in the period between 1962 and 1984. A survey in Senegal by a team from the Ecological Research Centre in Dakar reached similar conclusions.

Last July, American scientists reported that the Sahara had actually shrunk since 1984. Their satellite pictures showed a large annual variation, but no clear evidence of permanent change, despite reports since 1916 claiming that the desert was growing.

Professor Ulf Hellden, of Lund university's physical geography department, reports in *Ambio* that

his team looked at the situation around 103 villages and waterholes during the period between 1961 and 1983, and found no evidence of desert growth.

There were no major shifts in the northern cultivation limit, no significant changes in sand dunes and no visible encroachment by the desert, he says.

No changes in vegetation cover and crop productivity were identified that could not be explained simply by varying rainfall.

Clive Agnew, of the geography department at University College London, agrees that evidence for desertification is scanty. He suggests that the agencies have been concentrating on the wrong problem.

"They have concentrated on the desert fringe, but actually very few

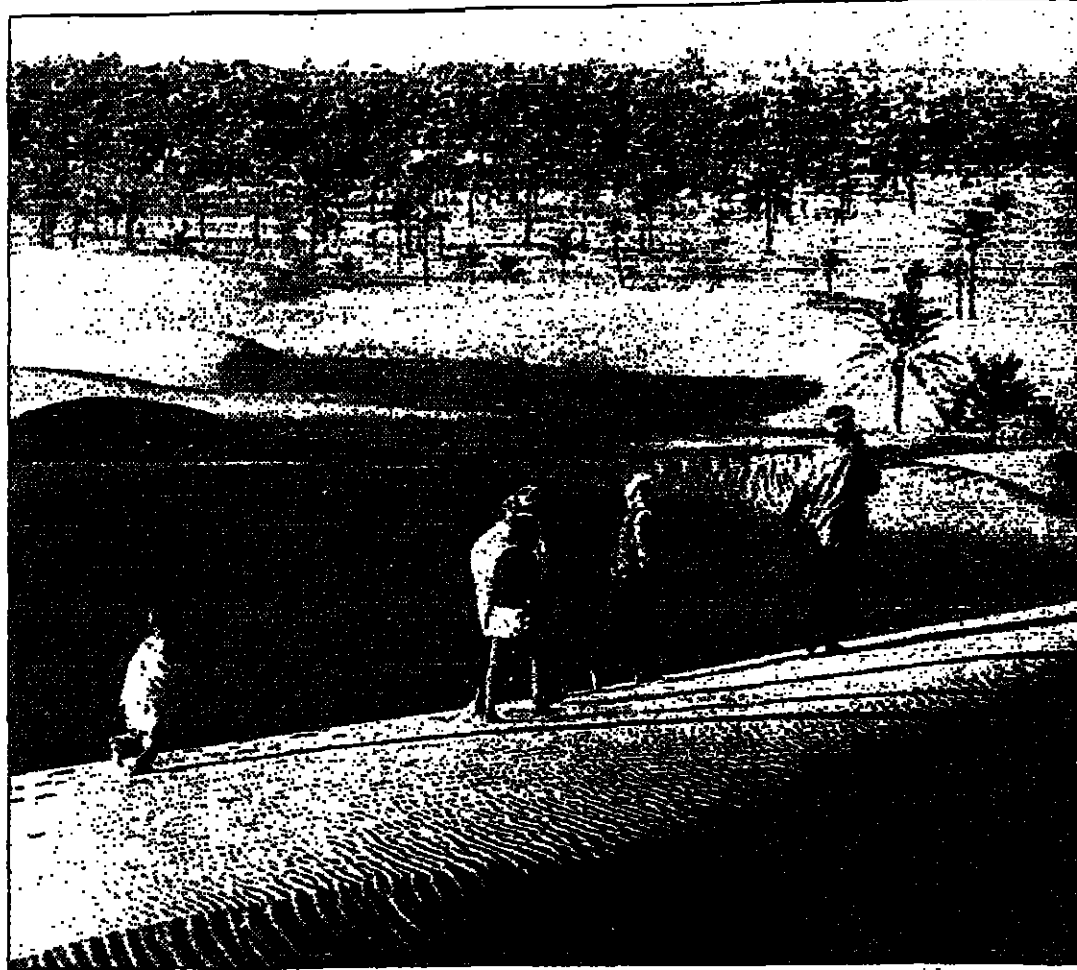
people live there," Dr Agnew says. "Much more important are the semi-arid areas, where a lot of people live."

More important than desertification, in his view, is soil degradation, which can occur anywhere and can have many causes, including bad farming practice.

He has studied the effect of recurrent drought around the Sahara and found that its effects on agriculture have been exaggerated. Traditional subsistence farming of crops such as millet has hardly suffered, but the raising of livestock and cash crops such as groundnuts has been severely hit.

Today Dr Agnew believes that Unep has begun to acknowledge that its emphasis on desertification was misplaced. Dr Hellden, however, quotes from this year's Unep calendar, which makes all the same assertions as in the past.

He believes that the claim cannot be justified and that the time has come for a proper assessment of desertification based on scientific principles.



Shifting sands: have millions of pounds of aid been wasted on trying to contain deserts?

Unlocking the elderly from home fire danger

Locks made for old people's flats can waste vital seconds during emergencies

Many old people are at risk of dying in fires because the locks fitted to the front doors of their flats take too long to open. A survey of locks, designed for emergency escapes from flats has found that although most elderly people can open them in five seconds or less, some locks can take much longer. Two makes could not be opened by some people after two and a half minutes of trying.

In a real emergency, they would probably be dead, said John Harrington-Lynn, an engineer with the environment department's Building Research Establishment (BRE) at Watford, Hertfordshire.

The tests were carried out at the Institute for Consumer Ergonomics, which is based within the



The lock Larry McDonald designed can be quickly opened

University of Technology, Loughborough. The study is part of an investigation of the design of locks and doors from which the BRE is trying to establish which are easy to operate and able to withstand blazes.

In the study, 175 women and 75 men aged 65 or over were timed trying to open, from the inside, the eight makes of locks supplied by manufacturers for the trials. The trials simulated different condi-

tions, from non-urgent to one in which the lock had to be opened in the dark, in a hurry.

Of the eight locks tested, seven were morose locks and one was a rim lock. The researchers found four that could be opened swiftly and four gave rise for concern.

Those that took a long time to open had various design drawbacks, said Mr Harrington-Lynn. These included the need for a key to unlock the door from the

inside, oddly sited handles or knobs controlling the latchbolt and designs so novel that they "depart too far from the expected normal modes of operation".

Other problems include locks that require two hands to open them or a variety of turning and pushing movements, as well as some that give no sensory clues to whether they are locked or unlocked.

For example, only half the elderly people could open lock A, the only rim lock, within two seconds. After five seconds, 30 per cent were still having problems and after two and a half minutes, just over 3 per cent were still confounded by its design.

Lock D, designed specifically for disabled people, was the most confusing. After five seconds, more than half were still struggling and after ten seconds, a third had still not "escaped".

Even after 30 seconds more than 16 per cent would still have been trapped inside their blazing flat. Just over 13 per cent were still grappling with the lock after two

and a half minutes. By comparison, most of those tested could open locks B, H, F, and G in five seconds or less.

BRE will not disclose the names of the locks that gave rise for concern but the fast-openers were the Albert Marston Facility Fort Lockset, the ASSA type 765, the McDonald Anti-Panic lock and the ASSA type 520x.

For example, the McDonald lock, designed by Larry McDonald of Salford, Greater Manchester, an independent locksmith, was opened by more than half of the people in two seconds and by 96.7 per cent in five seconds or less. Nearly 94 per cent of the elderly opened the ASSA type 520x in two seconds.

The findings have been sent to the environment department. Mr Harrington-Lynn emphasised that the locks tested were only a small sample of those commercially available.

The researchers will next test the locks to see how they stand up to forcing by a potential burglar.

NICK NUTTALL

Through the ice barrier

Nuclear-powered icebreakers may be used to lead convoys of freighters through the northeast passage north of Siberia between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, according to the Fridtjof Nansen Institute in Oslo. The passage could halve the distance between some ports in Europe and North America and Asia.

The study was undertaken at the request of Russian officials, who believe that 30 nuclear-powered icebreakers could keep the passage open for ten months a year.

Southampton University is rated sixth in a worldwide survey of basic electronic engineering research, the only British university to feature in the top ten. The survey, by the American Institute for Scientific Information, is based on the number of times an organisation's research papers

are cited by scholars. Stanford University in California was top.

NEC has introduced what it says is the world's fastest computer. The Japanese company's SX-3 44R can make 25.6 billion calculations a second, beating the 24 billion of the top model made by Cray Research, the American company. Cray conceded that the NEC machine has a higher peak speed but said more significant was parallel computational speed, where Cray's top model is five times faster.

The Centre of Disaster Study and Prevention in Lima has warned that the El Niño current in the Pacific Ocean, which recurs every seven years or so, could cause widespread flooding in the country this year. Up to 160,000 houses near the River Tarma could be flooded if El Niño causes torrential rains. The effects of El Niño could be more widespread. The last time it appeared, in 1983, worldwide climate changes occurred.

Law Report January 23 1992 Court of Appeal

No power to make order in Brussels arbitration

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Channel Tunnel Group Ltd and France Manche SA v Balfour Beatty Construction Ltd and Others

Before Lord Justice Neill, Lord Justice Woolf and Lord Justice Staughton

[Judgment January 22]

An English court did not have jurisdiction to exercise all of the powers in the Arbitration Act 1950 in the case of an arbitration abroad even where the parties

had agreed to English curial law and there was no jurisdiction under section 12(6)(h) to grant an interim injunction where the place chosen by the parties as the seat of arbitration was Brussels.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment when allowing the appeal of Balfour Beatty Construction Ltd and 10 other English and French consortium companies against an order of Mr Justice Evans on December 4, 1991 that, upon an undertaking by that consortium, no injunction would be ordered against them

restraining them from suspending work relating to the cooling system of the Channel Tunnel and which was the subject of a contract made between the consortium and the Channel Tunnel Group Ltd and France Manche SA (Eurotunnel).

Mr Bernard Rix, QC and Mr Andrew Forster, QC, for the consortium; Mr John Dyson QC, Mr Mark Howard and Mr Vivian Ramsey for Eurotunnel.

LORD JUSTICE STAUGHTON said that the plaintiff companies, comprising Eurotunnel, were the employers under a contract to build a tunnel under the Channel between England and France. The defendants together formed a consortium known as Trans Manche Link

who, as contractors, wrote on October 3, 1991 to Eurotunnel that unless certain conditions were immediately met, they would be obliged to suspend all work relating to the cooling system of the tunnel.

On October 14, 1991 Eurotunnel issued a writ against Trans Manche Link claiming an injunction restraining them in breach of an agreement dated August 13, 1986 from suspending work which related to the cooling system of the tunnel.

Mr Justice Evans had ordered that "on the defendants by their counsel undertaking that they will not suspend work in respect of the cooling system without giving [Eurotunnel] 14 days notice, there be no order".

The contractors appealed against that order which at first sight seemed odd since no order had been made against them. What the contractors really complained about was that Mr Justice Evans was prepared to grant a mandatory injunction which required them to continue work on the cooling system and that he refrained from doing so only because an undertaking was offered. This presented no technical obstacle to the hearing of the appeal.

A stay in favour of arbitration

proceedings was to be granted even though there had not yet been a decision by, or even reference to an arbitration panel under the terms of the 1986 contract between the parties.

But that did not conclude the question whether there should nevertheless be an injunction. The grant of a stay to the action merely decided the framework in which the application for an injunction fell to be considered.

An English court under section 12(6)(h) of the 1950 Act could grant an interim injunction in a case where the parties had agreed that disputes should be settled by arbitration and even where proceedings in court were otherwise stayed.

The power under section 12(6)(h) of the 1950 Act could be exercised before there had been any request for arbitration or the appointment of arbitrators, provided that the applicant intended to take the dispute to arbitration in due course.

Further, the meaning of "reference" in section 12(6)(h), the power of the court in such a case would be exercised "for the purpose of and in relation to a reference".

Further, the power to grant an interim injunction under that section was not limited to the detention or preservation of goods

or other property or to preserving the status quo. It might, in an appropriate case, be exercised by granting an interim mandatory injunction, such as an order to continue performance of a building contract.

If there was a dispute between two English companies who had agreed to arbitrate in England, there would be jurisdiction to grant the injunction. But in the present case some of the parties were French and the parties had all agreed to arbitrate in Brussels.

It was often said that statutes of the United Kingdom had no application to things which happened outside that part of the United Kingdom for which they were enacted. But in the case of a civil dispute the problem required closer analysis.

One had to ascertain the connecting factor between the rules of conflict of laws in order to find which country's laws were to be applied. Each enactment had to be considered separately.

The territorial application of section 4 of the 1950 Act and section 1 of the Arbitration Act 1975 was that they applied not only to court proceedings in the relevant part of the United Kingdom but to arbitration proceedings anywhere in the world. But it by no means followed that other

provisions of the 1950 Act applied to arbitrations anywhere in the world.

An English court did not have the jurisdiction to exercise all of the powers in the 1950 Act in the case of an arbitration held abroad, even if the parties had agreed to English curial law.

It could exercise some of them, for example by staying court proceedings within the jurisdiction or by enforcing an award. And in the converse case, where parties arbitrated within the jurisdiction but agreed on the procedural law of a foreign country, at least some of the powers conferred by the English Act could still be exercised.

The connecting factor for the application of section 12(6)(h) of the 1950 Act to a case containing a foreign element was the place which the parties had chosen as the seat of the arbitration. If that was in England or Wales, the English courts had jurisdiction; if not, they had none.

It followed that the English court had no jurisdiction under section 12(6)(h) in the present case, since the seat of any arbitration was Brussels.

Solicitors: Messrs, Freshfields.

Asserting title to land

Marsden v Miller and Others

Before Lord Justice Scott and Sir John Megaw

[Judgment January 16]

A person having no documentary title to land could not assert against another such person his title to the land based on an act of possession consisting of the erection of a fence for a short time around the land.

The Court of Appeal so held in dismissing an appeal by the plaintiff, Mr Gerald Marsden, from the refusal by Judge Holt in Chorley County Court on February 11, 1991 to grant a declaration that he was entitled, as against his neighbours, the defendants, Mr W. Miller and members of his family, to possession of land at Eccleston, Lancashire.

Mr John Bonney and Mr David Partington for the plaintiff; Mr William George for the defendants.

LORD JUSTICE SCOTT said that the disputed land lay between the plaintiff's and the defendants' properties. It was free of buildings and until 1981 had been used by both parties for recreational purposes. Surprisingly, the true owner of the land was not known.

On August 8, 1981 the plaintiff, appearing to have formed a plan to acquire for himself the disputed land, caused a fence to be erected around its boundary. The defendants made vigorous

protests while the fence was being erected and it was removed within some 24 hours. The plaintiff had made no attempt to re-erect it.

In 1984 the plaintiff commenced the proceedings seeking a declaration of his entitlement to possession of the land and an injunction restraining the defendants from entering on it. That was strong relief to claim, given that the plaintiff did not own the disputed land, that none of his predecessors was ever in adverse possession of it and that the defendants had made use of the land in a variety of ways since 1966.

The question was whether the plaintiff ever took possession of the land. If he did then the law provided remedies against the disturbance of his *de facto* possession.

It was well established that to obtain possession of land, both a mental element and a factual element were requisite. The factual element had to involve an appropriate degree of exclusive physical control. The mental element, the *animus possidendi*, had to consist of an intention to take possession to the exclusion of all others.

When the fence was erected in 1981 the plaintiff had evinced the necessary *animus possidendi*. But had he assumed a sufficient degree of physical control? Relying on *Powell v McFarlane*

(1979) 38 P & CR 452, Mr Bonney submitted that the mere erection of the fence was a sufficient assumption of effective control.

His Lordship disagreed. In a case where the object land was being used by others, the would be possessor, not being a person entitled in law to possession, could not obtain default possession that the law would recognise unless the acts relied on as constituting the taking of possession were effective to exclude those others.

Had the defendants acquiesced in the erection of the fence, then it might well have been an effective taking of exclusive possession. But they did not do so.

If the fence had been so strong that it could not have been removed by the defendants and their rigorous protests might not have prevented the conclusion being reached that the plaintiff had achieved *de facto* exclusive possession. But the fence was not of that character.

The inescapable fact was that the erection of the fence did not give the plaintiff effective control of the disputed land. The judge was right in concluding that the plaintiff had never obtained such possession as was necessary to support his action for trespass. Solicitors: Cooper Law & Lester, Blackpool; Banks Wilson, Preston.

Court cannot heed social ends

Regina v Stark

Before Lord Lane, Lord Chief Justice, Mr Justice Kennedy and Mr Justice Jowitt

[Judgment January 17]

To manipulate a sentence to achieve a social end was not for the Court of Appeal: it was a matter for the exercise of the royal prerogative of mercy.

The Court of Appeal so held on an appeal by Gerard Michael Stark aged 39, against a sentence of four years imprisonment passed at Kingston Crown Court by Judge Macrae on pleas of guilty to possessing diamorphine and cannabis.

MR JUSTICE JOWITT, giving the judgment of the court, said that the appeal was based on the appellant's short life expectancy because of AIDS. The prognosis varied among doctors to not more than 12 months and 18 months to two years. There was no doubt that prison regimes bore hardly on him and the counsel had asked their Lordships to change radically a sentence otherwise perfectly proper because the appellant wished to die with dignity. It seemed to their Lordships

that to manipulate a sentence was not within the province of the court. It could be used by instancing a person serving a properly imposed sentence and developing a disease. The court would not interfere in such a case. Although adjustment would be made as a matter of mercy, what was being asked of their Lordships was for them to change radically a perfectly proper sentence.

Because of the appellant's condition the offences for which he was eventually sentenced had been allowed to lie on the file. Five weeks later he was in possession of heroin and cocaine. He had a record of drug offences and if he were allowed to be at large there would be a heavy risk that he would report to drug trafficking.

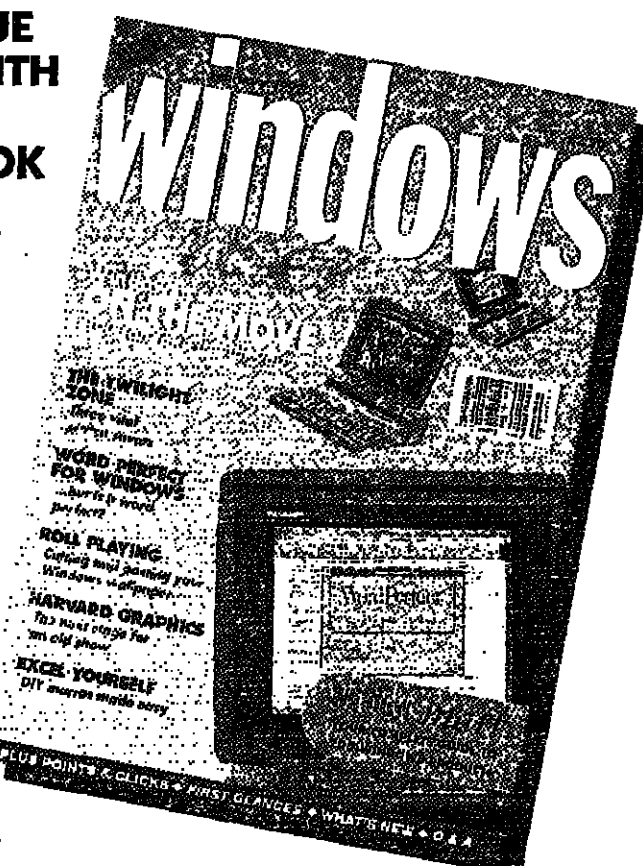
An investigation into his profile, before the appeal, resulted in a finding that he had profited to the extent of £60,000. It was not for their Lordships' court to manipulate a sentence so as to achieve a social end. That was a matter for the exercise of the royal prerogative and not for their Lordships. However, their Lordships would direct that the medical reports before them be forwarded to the prison authorities. The appeal was dismissed.

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Card is key to locking out car thieves

Darkness that needs to see the light

Villagers in Africa are stricken by its miseries — yet the old in Japan avoid it. Jeremy Laurance looks at a new campaign to explore and explain the mysteries of depression

The most miserable people in the world, measured on an international rating scale, are said to be rural village dwellers in Uganda. They outstrip even those archetypal victims, single mothers with small children living in tower blocks in inner London.

By contrast, Basque-speaking rural communities in northern Spain have among the lowest rates of depression. The explanation could be genetic or it could reflect the quality of social support. In Japan, for example, where the elderly are venerated, depression in the age group is almost unknown. Public respect contributes to their strong sense of self-worth.

In Britain, three million people are estimated to be affected and the number is thought to be rising. But in half of these the depression goes unrecognised and untreated, exacting a huge toll of human misery and taking the lives of more than 4,000 people a year — many of them young — by suicide. In response to concern about the suicide rate, especially among the young, the Samaritans today launch an appeal for £1 million, to be raised through WH Smith's shops, for a national telephone network with one number.

Effective treatment is available but public fear of the stigma of mental illness and professional reluctance to investigate emotional problems conspire to keep the suffering hidden — and almost certainly increase its extent.

Next week, the Royal Colleges of Psychiatrists and General Practitioners launch a five-year campaign to raise awareness of the condition and improve its treatment. Depression "is not a passing mood or personal weakness, but a major health disorder which causes untold suffering", the colleges say. Their campaign aims to help professionals to recognise it and encourage the public to seek treatment for it.

Recognition can be difficult, for both patients and their doctors. There is no distinct illness called

depression which parallels, say, pneumonia. There is a continuum from ordinary unhappiness through neurotic misery to psychotic delusions (such as "everyone is out to get me"). It can be difficult to tell where on the continuum a person falls. A period of sadness is to be expected after certain events — divorce or redundancy, for example. But sometimes the sadness cannot be shaken off.

Depression drains the pleasure, as well as the point, from life.

Depression is not a passing mood or personal weakness, but a major health disorder which causes untold suffering

People in its grip lose the sense of their own value, and then of the value of anything. Many people suffer months or years of acute distress alone. Doctors tell of depressed mothers who have confessed: "I would rather see my children dead than suffer this." Even cancer patients who have withstood surgery and chemotherapy say that depression was the hardest part to cope with.

People who have not been depressed do not know what it is like. They may be unsympathetic, telling sufferers to pull themselves together and snap out of it. The sufferers fear being taken for malingers and often feel to blame for their condition. The

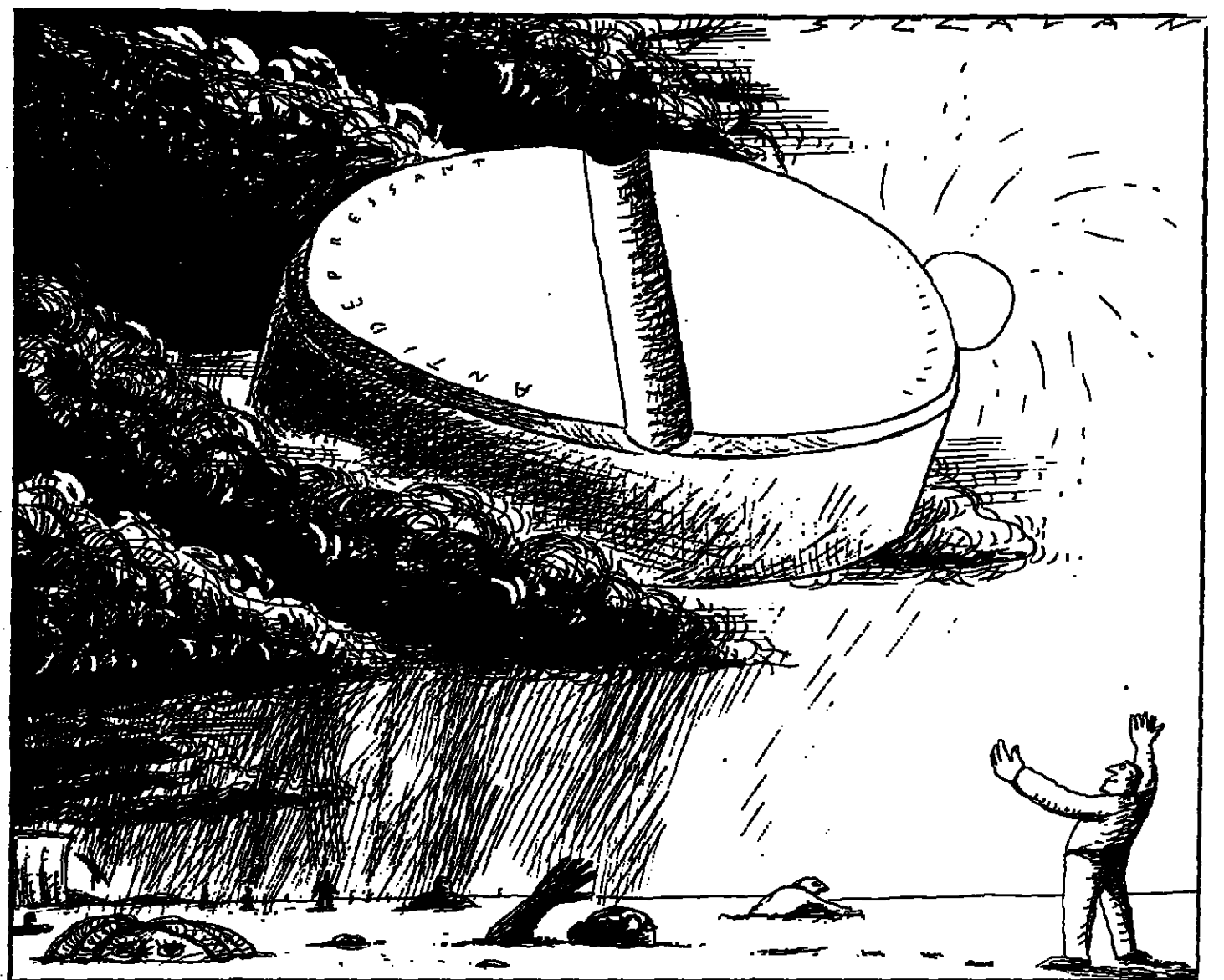
shame adds to the depression. A typical complaint is: "If I had a broken leg people would at least know that something was wrong."

Major depression — the type that requires treatment — is defined by psychiatrists as a pervasive loss of enjoyment and low mood for most of every day for at least two weeks. In addition, at least four of the following seven symptoms must be present: change in sleep patterns (waking early or sleeping longer); loss or gain of appetite or weight; tiredness; loss of concentration, memory or inability to make decisions; thoughts of death and suicide; being agitated or slowed down; loss of self-confidence and low self-esteem. The key indicator is a change in the individual's habitual mood or performance.

People with low mood but fewer than four of these symptoms are said to have minor depression and those with low mood alone "sub-clinical" depression. They require support, a sympathetic ear and in some cases counselling to prevent their condition getting worse. Those with major depression require more intensive psychological therapy or drug treatment.

However, sufferers are often difficult to spot because sometimes the depression is disguised as, or concealed by, a physical illness. In a recent study in which 50 GPs were monitored for a week, only six spotted all the patients with major depression who consulted them. The rest were misled by the complex ways in which depression can reveal itself. "People often come complaining of constipation or weight loss because they feel they need a physical ticket to see the GP," said Dr David Baldwin, a spokesman for the Royal College of Psychiatrists campaign. "The psychological symptoms require wheedling out."

The disguise may be so successful that the sufferer is deceived, too. Many people who have tried stoically to cover up their depression for months or years say that only when they started drug treat-



ment did they realise how miserable they had been. "The drugs brought me to the surface," said one. "I was surprised they could lift my mood without making me feel befuddled," said another.

Many reject drugs because they fear becoming dependent. But even after years of use, anti-depressants are not addictive, unlike tranquilisers such as valium. "Anti-depressants have been available since 1955 and people have no difficulty giving them up," said Dr Baldwin. "The problem is trying to persuade people to continue taking them."

For many people the best treatment may be drugs combined with psychological therapy. There is some evidence that the two together are more effective than either alone. Some psychiatrists sum up their approach as: "Pills for symptoms, psychotherapy for problems."

Cognitive therapy, a refinement of the US notion of "positive thinking", has been shown to be especially useful in depression. Depressed people tend to express their misery through similar ideas. "I'm a failure", "Everything I do turns out badly", and "There's

nothing to look forward to", are typical.

The therapy aims to help people stand back from their thoughts, which are nearly always gross distortions, examine them objectively and correct them by reasoning.

Depressed people may conclude that they are not liked merely because an acquaintance has failed to recognise them in the street. The therapist aims to help in distinguishing appropriate from inappropriate responses and reasonable from unreasonable interpretations.

But cognitive therapy typically involves 15 to 20 one-hour sessions over three months, so its availability on the NHS is limited. Most depressed people who consult their doctor are likely to be offered drugs. Many resist because of the fear of stigma. Yet taking anti-depressants provides no more evidence of weakness than requesting an anaesthetic injection at the dentist.

Studies show that at least 70 per cent of patients with major depression respond to drug treatment. But because the nature of the

illness is poorly understood by GPs, most do not prescribe the drugs for long enough. "The average course of treatment is six weeks, which is far too low," said Dr Baldwin. "People will get better but half will relapse within the next six months."

An episode of depression, if left untreated, lasts six to nine months on average. Most specialists believe that the drugs relieve the symptoms, in the way that aspirin relieves a headache, until the underlying disorder resolves itself. If they are stopped too soon, therefore, the depression re-emerges. The current advice is to take the drugs for at least six to nine months after the depression has lifted.

Some people should take the drugs for even longer. Someone who has suffered two or more episodes of depression in five years is estimated to have a 70-80 per cent chance of suffering a further episode. Psychiatrists now advise that they should continue to take the drugs for two years after they have recovered from their current depression.

Side effects, such as dry mouth and blurred vision, tend to wear

off in the early weeks. But some sufferers worry that the drugs may interfere with their capacity to solve their problems and sort out their lives. Experience suggests the opposite. As one patient put it: "The drugs don't help you solve your problems directly but they restore normal functioning so that you can get on with your life and move forward again, instead of being locked in thoughts of how hopeless and impossible everything seems and how useless and blameworthy you are."

The causes of depression are still unknown. Genes, hormones, stress, psychological and social factors all play a part. Depression often follows a viral infection, especially glandular fever or hepatitis.

Women are twice as likely to suffer depression as men — or it may be that men find it harder to acknowledge, responding with drinking, violence or crime rather than introspection.

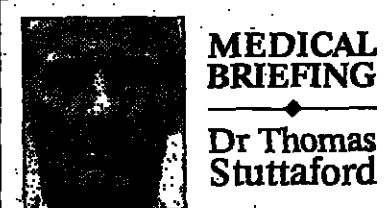
For some people suffering seasonal affective disorder, the only cure is sunshine. But whatever treatment route is chosen, some treatment is nearly always better than none.

Anxiety and the egg donor

MR SAM ABDALLA of the assisted conception unit at the Lister Hospital in London said this week that recent publicity about ovum donation, which had emphasised the risks attached to the collecting procedure, has not in fact discouraged would-be donors. On the contrary, it has encouraged other women to volunteer.

More than 300 women are in the queue at the clinic for a donated ovum which would mean a one in four chance of conception.

Eggs are provided by women who are themselves having IVF treatment or by donors. Forty per cent of the donors are concerned relatives or friends of patients who have had or are having treatment for infertility. 60 per cent are solely motivated by compassion and have had no previous connection with the service.



MEDICAL BRIEFING
Dr Thomas Stuttford

Although the philosophy of ovum donation is compared to that of artificial insemination by donor, the collecting procedure is rather more irksome.

The woman uses a nasal spray of buserelin, colloquially known as "the sniff", for a complete monthly cycle together with injections of gonadotro-

phin hormone over a ten day period.

On day 12, the ovary is assessed by ultrasound and if the development of the eggs has been suitable the patient is given an injection of another hormone so the ripened eggs can be collected under general anaesthetic two days later.

The risks are twofold, in some cases the ovaries are hyperstimulated and secretions from them will then cause, in milder cases, abdominal discomfort. In serious cases, which are exceptionally rare, fluid can collect in the abdominal cavity or even in the lungs.

The other risk is a small one associated with a general anaesthetic, however short.

Risks are fully explained to donors and no efforts are made to pressurise any into taking part.

Feeling Bushed

PRESIDENT Bush's medical history is so complex, and his diseases so varied, that if he was an impecunious pensioner he would be able to earn an extra dollar or two by

being a volunteer at medical students' final examinations. Like Dr Hugh L'Eang, the medical historian, who has recently written about the president in the magazine *Monitor*, they would not only have to discuss his thyroid disease with its cardiac complications but the problems he faced in his thirties from

peptic ulceration and the consequential haemorrhages. Since the 1960s when the Bush ulcer was playing up, the advent of the H2 blockers Zantac and Tagamet has revolutionised treatment.

This month a rival to the H2 blockers, Losec (omeprazole) has been licensed for the first time for the initial treatment of peptic ulceration. Previously it had been reserved for cases which had failed to respond to other drugs.

Losec has also been approved for long-term treatment of reflux oesophagitis, heartburn due to inflammation of the gullet.

Recent research suggests that Losec may alter the course of a comparatively rare complication of oesophagitis, Barrett's metaplasia, where pre-malignant changes can occur in the cells of the oesophageal lining.



Safer thermometer

A HAND, ready to be held against a fevered brow, is, it is sometimes claimed, the only instrument a doctor needs to tell whether a patient has a temperature.

This time-hallowed procedure may look suitably caring but at best it is inaccurate, and at worst misleading.

Temperatures have to be taken, but the idea of sharing a thermometer, even one kept in an antiseptic liquid, is as worrying to the bacteriologists as it is disturbing to the patients who do not like to think where it might have been before.

A firm, Astra Meditec, has now produced an answer: Dispotemps. A Dispotemp is a condom for the thermometer. It does not obviate the need for other antiseptic precautions, but by providing a close-fitting disposable sheath, which completely covers the possibly infected instrument, it provides a safer means of taking temperatures.

Having taken one temperature, the doctor can discard the sheath, disinfect the thermometer and, if need be, resheathe the thermometer for the next patient.

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Cinema: Geoff Brown on *JFK*, *Blame It On the Bellboy*, *Driving Me Crazy* and *Ma Nuit chez Maud*



Confrontation: District Attorney Jim Garrison (Kevin Costner), investigating the assassination of President Kennedy, with the judge (John F. Kennedy) in Oliver Stone's *JFK*

Bold but naïve crusader

Toasting Kennedy's assassination, a drunken Ed Asner rasps: "Here's to the New Frontier Camelot in smithereens!" *JFK* (15, Empire, MGM Tracadero), Oliver Stone's massive, widely publicised drama about District Attorney Jim Garrison's crusade to uncover the truth about November 22, 1963, takes those smithereens and fuses them into an astonishing, electrifying movie.

Forget for a moment the wolf pack's cries of bias, sacrilege or historical inaccuracy. Succumb to the hurrying pace, the technical wizardry that allows Stone to dart between recreated scenes, archive footage, photographs and documents without skipping a beat.

Facts—or suppositions—presented as facts—pour from the mouths of Kevin Costner and his New Orleans investigators—dates, times, ballistic reports, tangled evidence from Dallas eye-witnesses. This is not the film for lazybones.

Neither is *JFK* custom-built for Costner's fans. Regularly dressed in dull lawyer suits, with briefcase, umbrella and unbecoming specs, Jim Garrison scarcely inspires pin-ups. Yet Costner remains crucial to the film's strategy.

Stone sees Garrison in sympathetic terms, as a lone, humble man fighting against the odds, who refuses to accept that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone—the theory propounded by Washington and endorsed by the Warren Commission. Having assumed James Stewart's mantle in *Field of Dreams*, Costner now dons it again. Sincerity drips

from his slow, quiet speech. If Kevin Costner comes to believe Kennedy was felled by the CIA, the FBI and Uncle Tom Cobleigh, star power alone suggests that it must be so.

A marvellous troupe cluster around Costner: Gary Oldman as Oswald, the hapless malcontent; Tommy Lee Jones, deliciously languid as the shady businessman Clayton Shaw; Joe Pesci as the volatile David Ferrie, one of many malcontents dragged into the light.

"Sissy Spacek (Garrison's neglected wife) draws the film's short straw. Stone equips her with five children and a dog, but only the most meagre hints you can sense him itching to ditch the home front and get back to battle.

For make no mistake, *JFK* is a war movie as much as anything else. Vietnam-busters like a black cloud. Kennedy, Stone asserts, was pledged to withdraw from South East Asia and would never have committed combat troops; an attitude that set the military against him, and helped pave the way for the gunshots at Dealey Plaza.

But here *JFK* runs into trouble. Garrison's quest to solve what he calls "the secret murder at the heart of the American dream" assumes that Kennedy is close to a saint: had he stayed in office, the theory runs, he would have saved Stone's generation the agony of Vietnam, solved the civil rights problem and spread Camelot's wonders worldwide. At the very least, this view is naïve.

Stone's partisan passion also leads him astray in the final reels. We are in court for the trial of Clayton Shaw. Garrison, prosecuting, gives

his summation: grand, sweeping words about the country's malaise; literary references to *Hamlet*, to Tennyson. Action stops and the typewriter takes over.

At the same time, Stone's crusading zeal is the force that drives the film forward, drawing the viewer deep inside one of the century's biggest puzzles; throughout 190 minutes, our interest rarely flags. *JFK* is a film to reckon with: pounding with energy and cinematic daring, as flawed and provocative as the man it mourns.

First features by writer-directors can be glorious occasions for stylistic indulgence and intense autobiography: look at *Citizen Kane*, or *Les Quatre Cents Coups*. Or the director may pocket his personality to prove his commercial credentials: look at *Blame It On the Bellboy* (12, Odeon West End), the American debut of a 36-year-old Yorkshireman, Mark Herman, whose student graduation film won an Oscar.

If Herman delved into his own experience (he worked selling bacon for the family firm in Hull) what wonders might not be produced? Instead, he has devised a soulless farce machine: slick enough to snare Hollywood finance and low-voltage stars such as Dudley Moore, but lacking individual flavour.

Herman's avowed aim was for an "Ealing-type comedy". He missed: they always do. The film better resembles those empty-headed Sixties comedies, with glamorous European settings. Here, the location is Venice (see in helicopter footage and

baroque-tinged music). Three men—Orton, Horton and Lawton—stay at a hotel serviced by a bellboy with perilous English. Meek little Orton (Moore), sent to clinch a property sale, gets confused with Lawton (Bryan Brown), a Mafia hitman. Estate agent Patsy Kensit, expecting Orton, meets Horton (Richard Griffiths), a bank manager on a dirty weekend. "I suppose we'd better get down to the nitty-gritty," Kensit chirps.

Griffiths, all waddles and winks, delivers the brightest performance: Bronson Pinchot makes the most of his moments as the befuddled bellboy, Messrs Moore and Brown brings up the rear. Venice weaves its usual spell; but too many jokes follow the pigeons who intercept Lawton's bullets and fall to the ground, dead.

Driving Me Crazy (12, Cannon Oxford Street) was called *Dutch* in the States. Whatever the title, box-office prospects seem poor: for John Hughes, its writer and producer, has temporarily mislaid the golden touch that generated *The Breakfast Club* and *Home Alone*.

Comedy needs likeable characters. Hughes burdens himself with a thoroughly odious blue-chip adolescent, Doyle, who is forcibly snatched from his boarding school for a long ride back to mom and her Thanksgiving celebrations. Doyle's escort is Dutch (Ed O'Neill), mom's new boyfriend: tirelessly virile and working-class. "I'm a breakthrough kind of a guy!" he brags; but the vicious brat (Ethan Randall, seen in *All I Want For Christmas*) brings him, and the film, close to defeat.

Shrill characters aside, Hughes's script is patched together from remnants. A holiday season, a cross-country trip with mismatched travellers, sudden pools of sentiment: wasn't all this last assembled under the title *Planes, Trains & Automobiles*? Peter Faiman, the director of *Crocodile Dundee*, does little to accelerate the pace of its 107 minutes: we reach journey's end dispirited and exhausted.

A dip into the past revives the spirits. Eric Rohmer's *Ma Nuit chez Maud* (12, National Film Theatre and Renoir), from 1969, bristles with intricate talk of morals and philosophy as snow descends on the dull, tidy town of Clermont-Ferrand (beautifully captured in Nestor Almendros's black-and-white photography). Voyeurs should expect nothing from Jean-Louis Trintignant's night with Maud: a dutiful Catholic, he sleeps alone in a chair, though Françoise Fabian's burlesque performance as the free-thinking divorcee would be enough to tempt a monastery.

Today, most films shrink from showing they have brains: the lowest common denominator rules. But *Ma Nuit chez Maud*—the film that sealed Rohmer's international reputation—makes no bones about its high IQ. Talk flows freely, wittily, about Pascal, religious beliefs and Marxist philosophy.

Yet characters remain people, not soap-boxes and Rohmer takes infectious delight in watching them manoeuvre their clashing ideals. Crisply shot, seductively acted, *Ma Nuit chez Maud* shines like a jewel in a murky world.

TELEVISION REVIEW

Not all wrapped up in their leaves

Considering the quantity of regular interviews on the subject, you would think there was some mystery to the diurnal round of the full-time writer. "What do they do all day?" is often asked: but the answer is always a let-down. Well, they put on cardigans, usually. And they make cups of tea. And they sit at desks. And sometimes, not surprisingly, they get lonely and demoralised. The poet Hugo Williams wondered once (in the *Times Literary Supplement*) whether his function in life had not been reduced to converting sundry brown liquids into colourless ones.

Last night's larky Bookmark (BBC 2) was a refreshing antidote to all this. Here were jolly interviews with a range of writers who had followed the well-attested advice, "Don't give up the day job", and as a consequence were happy as Larry.

Interspersed with the interviews were short, funny dramatised scenes in which a would-be writer with an effete Beardsley profile and a fancy waistcoat attempted to peck out the opening paragraph of Chapter One. His miserable efforts were set against the robust good sense of people such as boyish poet Simon Armitage, who works as a probation officer, and the serene ex-memsaheb Sara Banerji, who supports her novel-writing by gardening in Oxford at £6 an hour.

evident horror, and insisted that his writing had not benefited from it.

Erich Segal, after the huge success of *Love Story*, had clung to his classics teaching at Yale, determined to prove that he was nevertheless a "serious" academic. And John Mortimer reflected on how pleasant it had been, during his playwright phase, to continue at the Bar. If things were going badly at the box office, you see, he could cheer himself up by winning a case.

Goodwin talked sometimes to the work colleagues of these part-time authors (though not when the subjects were famous). "Did you know he was a writer?" "Have you read any of his poetry?" A lorry driver in Shropshire said he had been surprised when he had read some of Peter Reading's poetry, but didn't mention whether he had checked a few dozen words in the *Shorter O.E.D.*, like the rest of us. Simon Armitage's boss said that the poetry didn't interfere with the work; and



Erich Segal: "serious"

Producer Daisy Goodwin asked good questions. For example, was Armitage an ambitious probation officer? Well, much as he loved his job, he had to admit that all his ambitions were literary. The point of the programme, however, was that having a day-job was healthy: it brought essential contact with other people; it supplied an identity, and took pressure off the Muse; and it paid the bills in a delightfully regular kind of way.

Goodwin had tracked down Paul Sayer, the psychiatric nurse whose first novel, *The Comforts of Madness*, famously won the Whitbread Prize in 1983. On receipt of this large cheque, Sayer had subsequently left his job, and now wrote novels all day in a featureless white room at home. He did not seem happy. In fact he evidently devoted a lot of energy to not screaming.

Each writer made a different point, or had different things to prove. The poet Peter Reading (an unengaging fellow) works as a weighbridge operator in Shropshire, flatly characterising the job as requiring no mental skills whatsoever. Melvyn Bragg looked back on his long-ago six-year period as a full-time writer with

in any case, you need a sense of writerly detachment if you are to succeed in the probation service. Sara Banerji said she hadn't told her employers she was a writer, for fear they would jump to the conclusion that she could not therefore be a decent gardener.

Writers are often accused of knowing nothing about the world of salaried employment. Listen to any episode of *The Archers* when the "estate office" is mentioned, and you will find the epitome of helpless guesswork: er, offices deal with files, don't they? So it was interesting to watch the details of some of these day-jobs: Armitage filling in an official form, for instance. But whether the stay-at-home writer is correct to envy the nine o'clock crowd flowing over London Bridge (as in *The Waste Land*) is another matter.

Certainly, as we watched this dispiriting sight in telephoto close-up, sighs short and infrequent were definitely exhaled, and each man fixed his eyes before his feet. "Thank goodness I don't have to sit at a word processor in a warm house all day," was probably the thought furthest from anybody's mind.

ARTS REVIEWS
Theatre and Music
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LYNNE TRUSS

Tricky case

THE film, *The Addams Family*, may be riding high at the cinema box-office, but this is no comfort to David Levy, executive producer of the Sixties television series, which first presented Charles Addams's macabre cartoons in narrative form. He is suing the film-makers for a minimum of \$50 million (£28 million), and claims authorship for various tricks transferred to the big screen: from Gomez's fencing skills and Moricia's habit of beheading roses, to the illuminated lightbulb in Uncle Fester's mouth.

South Bank Board. Her successor — front-runners are likely to include Sandy Nairne, the Arts Council's visual arts officer, David Elliott, director of the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford, Andrew Dempsey, Drew's deputy, and Catherine Lampert, director of the Whitechapel — will have more than enough to address. The Hayward is scheduled to be demolished under the South Bank's latest development scheme, and rebuilt on the other side of the Festival Hall.

Last chance

WHETHER The Kosh's *Dinner Dance* is dance, theatre or a new amalgam of both forms, there is no denying the commitment of the company to this entertaining, impressive for its split-second timing and exhilarating energy if for nothing else. The final performances are tonight, tomorrow and Saturday at 7.45pm at the Lyric, Hammersmith (081-741 2311).

Farewell to art

JOANNA Drew, the director of the Hayward Gallery, is retiring in September at the age of 63, after 40 years with the Arts Council and then the

GALLERIES: LONDON

Finding the magic in machinery

Nigel Hawkes reviews two exhibitions which entertainingly bridge the gap between the worlds of science and art



Edna Lumb: her work records "some wonderful things" slugs. By the mid-Sixties, living in Geneva, she was painting gravel quarries. She began to paint machines when she went to Biafra in the early Seventies to record the emergency relief flights, and was fascinated by engineers leaning like surgeons onto the engines of the ageing aircraft, frantically working at night as they struggled to keep the airlift going.

Her exhibition includes a painting of the cranes building the tower at Canary Wharf, an image which she characteristically prefers to the finished building. Down there in the Isle of Dogs another new space for art has been provided, and shows for the first time in this country a selection of curious, jokey

ment. At one level they are sculpture, at another entertaining toys, at a third elegant demonstrations of things seldom seen. *Tornado* by Ned Kahn creates the swirling currents of a twister from a rising column of water vapour, while his *Chaotic Pendulum* gives an insight into the unpredictable behaviour of a chaotic system.

At Canary Wharf there is a good sample of what the museum is all about. Among the most attractive of the exhibits are the contemplative ones, such as Carl Cheng's *Friendship Acrobatic Troupe*, a huge acrylic tank full of water through which air is bubbled in strange and soothing patterns — including magical smoke rings. Paul DeMarinis has created an excellent joke with his *Alien Voices*: two telephone kiosks between which two people may converse, their voices distorted in a variety of styles from horror movie to plainsong.

The same artist has provided four touch-sensitive guitars through which anybody can play tunes. Rhythm, tempo and key are provided by a computerised synthesiser which makes even non-musicians sound good.

Is this art or science? It is certainly good fun. Even the security men at Canary Wharf wander around with smiles on their faces, and there are not many galleries of which that can be said.

● Edna Lumb, at the Science Museum, Exhibition Road, London SW7 (071-938 8000), until May 4.

● Art from the Exploratorium, at the Rounda Gallery, Cabot Place East, Canary Wharf, London E14 (071-418 2418), until March 1.



"There is no law that requires any member of the Shadow Cabinet to know anything about their subject, but I have been steeped in education since childhood."

Jack Straw and his sister are members of a teaching dynasty. The TES talks to them, and their mother, this Friday.



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The terror of history

Michael Binyon on the Kremlin's secret archives

Communism's inner sanctum, the Soviet party's archives and documents where the truth has remained under lock and key for generations, is finally to be revealed to the world. Historians will be able to read the complete record which is to be microfilmed by the British firm Chadwyck-Healey. The potentially explosive effect can already be gauged by the use of *Moscow News* has made of KGB telephone log-books to question President Gorbachev's version of last August's attempted coup.

Mr Gorbachev himself began the movement for openness, but in launching his glasnost campaign, he intended only to counter the corrosive cynicism of the late Brezhnev years by reducing the credibility gap between what was said and what people saw around them. He wanted especially to "fill in the blank pages of history" and allow people to discuss what actually happened without fear. Only by removing the pervasive need for falsification — of facts, statistics, setbacks and public information — could a rational basis be created for individual responsibility and economic growth.

What Mr Gorbachev and liberal communists did not realise was that glasnost would not stop at Stalin's crimes. Once the nation became accustomed to breaking taboos — films showing the gulags, the destruction of churches, the weeping testimony of Bukharin's widow — more would be broken. Questioning would become a habit. People would demand to see for themselves the one thing that Marxism always claimed as the basis for its superiority: the "objective" truth. That meant access to secret documents. Yet while such crimes as the Ribbentrop-Molotov secret protocols and the Katyn massacre of Polish officers were admitted — through gritted teeth — Mr Gorbachev refused to open the entire party archive.

Communism was uniquely vulnerable to such examination. Marx insisted that the future could be predicted from the past, and Lenin wrote exhaustively on history as a basis for analysing social developments. However, when the Bolsheviks came to power, reality failed to match their predictions. Crime did not disappear, productivity did not increase as foreseen, nationalism did not diminish. Stalin could not accept error or blame. If reality did not correspond to history, history must be changed. So began the falsification of the past: a campaign of lies that even extended back into the 15th century in order to "prove" that Russia was then already a bourgeois democracy, passing through what the ideologists insisted was an essential stage between feudalism and communism.

The West has long known about and ridiculed this falsification of history, but when ordinary Russians began to realise that the moral framework of their society was based on lies, the momentum for change became unstoppable. Truth would out: more truth even than Western governments would allow to their own societies. The compilers of the television series *The Second Russian Revolution* were told more by the participants in Kremlin power struggles than any documentary-maker would learn from former cabinet ministers in Britain or France.

Now a whole society is indulging in a bitter debate over history, much as Germany did after the defeat of the Nazis. The effects are not always positive: generations and national groups have been set against each other, millions of old people have seen their life's work discredited, the search for truth has sometimes turned into vendetta. Already voices are heard decrying open access. Already Russians are calling for restrictions on the potential use of history for blackmail and nationalist agitation. But as Dr Jana Howlett, special adviser to the chief Russian archivist Rudolf Pikhov, said, only by making the documents available to all can a balanced assessment be made.

Within hours of the collapse of the Moscow coup in August, hardliners at the central committee began shredding communist party archives. They were stopped on Boris Yeltsin's orders. They knew that communism was threatened not just by the anger of Muscovites or the decrees of President Gorbachev, but by the people's access to the truth.

Bruce Arnold, the journalist whose phone was tapped, describes his fight with the Irish government

Why they bugged me



Bruce Arnold: victim of dirty tricks

The Irish have an appetite for the past unparalleled in modern political democracies. The events of 1982 have an obsessive interest, from the night Garret FitzGerald's government collapsed over the budget debate at the end of January to the fall of the Haughey-led administration after the November election.

Nothing attracts more attention than the phone-tapping of two political journalists, Geraldine Kennedy and myself. I remember the feeling well: it is like a burglary of the mind. By their nature, many of the conversations a political journalist has are private, secret and tense. This was particularly so for me, working as an English journalist in a country where nationalism often blurs into anti-British sentiments. I was also aware that calls made by my wife and three teenage children had been the subject of this persistent, silent intrusion.

Finally, there was the very strange reaction of colleagues, friends and strangers. Fellow journalists were suspicious. Being tapped seemed almost to be a kind of accolade for which I

should be grateful. It was the subject of mirth and smug remarks, and it brought notoriety rather than lasting credit. Perhaps the single most unhappy aspect was the damage done to my relationships with politicians of all parties, changing fundamentally the close involvement I had enjoyed in the political process in the Dail.

My telephone was tapped between May and mid-July, Geraldine Kennedy's from the end of July until November, mid-way through the second general election of that year. The tapping had nothing to do with government leaks. It was initiated largely because I was writing regularly about the growing disillusionment within the Fianna Fail party at Charles Haughey's inability to lead the party to electoral victory. He had lost the 1981 general election. He had come to power early in 1982 by doing a deal with an independent deputy and by

persuading the unreliable Workers' party to support him. Many people in Fianna Fail thought his leadership had many drawbacks, and I was reporting this frankly.

Although I had been a political journalist in Ireland since the early 1960s, my position as an Englishman was frequently referred to, often in a disparaging way. In a celebrated party conference speech in 1977, Liam Cosgrave, prime minister of the 1973-7 coalition, had attacked me as a "Blow-in who should either blow up or blow out".

This residual antipathy to a British commentator criticising Irish politicians was palpable in 1982. Additionally, I was

critical of the line taken by Charles Haughey's government over the Falklands war. The government was out of step with Europe, in part at least because of relations between Mr Haughey and Mrs Thatcher were strained.

This led to fibes about me being "anti-national" in my attitude, and this was used as part of the justification for tapping on my telephone. It was extremely difficult for me to deal with this criticism, which was repeated by members of Mr Haughey's Fianna Fail long after the 1983 announcement about the tap and the declaration by Garret FitzGerald's government that what had been done was wrong.

Moving swiftly after the announcement in January 1983, Mr Haughey and his party effectively pre-empted the position of Sean Doherty, then justice minister. Mr Haughey emphatically denied all knowledge. The party condemned what had been done and called for a judicial enquiry. And Mr Doherty was faced with a choice. Either he must challenge his leader and his party in the most confrontational way by telling the truth, or he must endorse Mr Haughey's declaration of ignorance and take all the blame for the phone-taps. He chose the latter course, and has lived with the consequences for nine years. He became caught up in lies, maintaining the pretence that state security was the motive for the taps.

I was forced to take a High Court action against the state. One of the purposes of this was to establish that I had constitutional rights, even though I was

not an Irish citizen within the terms of the Irish constitution. I then had to establish that these rights had been breached, and that the actions taken against me were illegal. This proved comprehensively successful, and the High Court awarded substantial damages to Geraldine Kennedy, myself and my wife. The judgment, in January 1987, did not, however, end the allegations about my role and attitude.

The confrontation that Sean Doherty avoided in 1983 has now taken place. It is his word against Mr Haughey's. Each man has a poor record of telling the truth, but their versions of the events of 1982 are diametrically opposed. But the latest version from Sean Doherty has a coherence of motive and purpose which Charles Haughey's declaration of ignorance has never had. Charles Haughey always knew it was his business to know. Political expediency dictated the need to deny all knowledge.

Bruce Arnold is principal political commentator on the *Irish Independent*.

Victims of daylight robbery

Bernard Levin says the banks are staging a blatant hold-up

Were I to suggest that Lord Alexander of Weedon, Sir John Quinton, Sir Peter Walters and Sir Jeremy Morse (respective chairmen of NatWest, Barclays, Midland and Lloyds) should go and sack themselves, I believe that they would not feel angry, upset, scornful or even litigious, but genuinely bewildered: why on earth, they would think, should we do such a thing?

One answer would be for them to study a recent phenomenon, which I have monitored with much pleasure. All over the country, whenever — and it is once a week or so — the headlines say "Banks set to lose hundreds of millions more" (the latest actual figure was £6.5 billion), there is cheering and delight. Where the "high street" banks are concerned, the worm has turned so completely that the customers, still smarting from the indignities and unpleasantness practised upon them over the years, hoot with laughter when they find that Maxwell took the banks for yet another few hundred millions in loans without them bothering with anything like sufficient security for the money. ("More, Bob? Of course, Bob. Pay it back whenever you feel flush, Bob.")

How does it go? "The Devil was sick, the devil a monk would be; the Devil was well, the devil a monk was he." So hated have the banks become, that they have even sworn to reform (in case legislation compels them to). Barclays, for instance, has promulgated a wonderfully funny "code of conduct" for aggrieved customers, and the others will no doubt be joining in the fun.

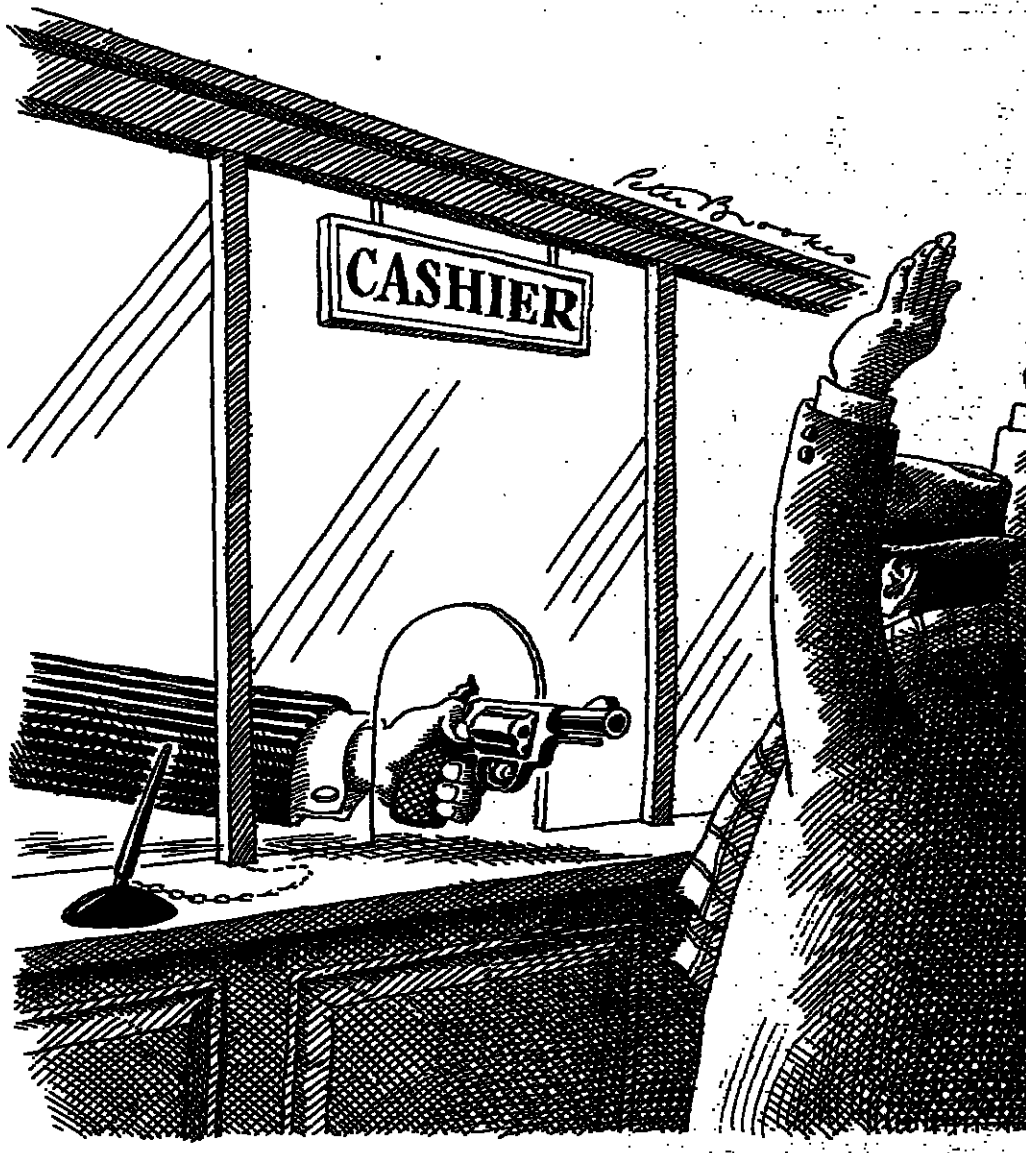
By now they must be feeling what the Christians felt when the lions were let in. Condemned for their profligacy towards rich crooks and for their parsimony towards small businesses, shamefully denying the phe-

nomenon of the "phantom withdrawals" from cash-machines even when the robbed cardholder can prove that he and the card were abroad when the theft took place, there is yet another wretched bit of bankers' tiny but all too significant, that I have recently come across.

The banks are selling life insurance. Nothing wrong with that, or even the junk mail common to entice customers to sign up. But it plainly did not catch on, so another form letter was sent out. Then the tired routine: "Due to a desire... to ensure that this protection is made available to as many Customers as possible, the Application Closing Date has been extended..." Do they really think they deceive their customers with such bamboozlings?

But now I must go into detail on a much bigger bamboozle, and one that is not nearly so easily spotted and skewered, for all that it has the characteristics of a nice old confidence trick. To my knowledge, the trick is so far confined to Barclaycard Visa and Barclaycard Mastercard, but no doubt the other credit card companies have found their own methods of hypnotising their customers into the belief that they are getting a bargain. It concerns a form of giveaway (don't you know that banks and bank offshoots never give anything away?) called Profiles, and its working is simplicity itself.

When a purchase of goods or services is made by using Barclaycard Visa or Barclaycard Mastercard, for every £10 spent the cardholder is awarded one Profile point. These points are automatically recorded, and with every monthly Visa or Mastercard account, the number of points the cardholder has accumulated is detailed. As it happens, I must be one of the most points-rich customers, for I use my cards very extensively (though of course I pay off the



whole balance every month: even I am not such a fool as to allow myself to go over time and fall into the hands of the most impudent scam that ever went by the name of interest.

The next step is the Profiles catalogue, which lays out, well photographed, most of the items that the Profile can get for his points, that being how it's done: you have built up, say, a credit of 500 points, you spot in the catalogue something which "costs" 500 points, and which

you want, and there you are. (From the photographs, the merchandise seems to be of good quality.)

Now watch the rabbit come out of the hat. Did you see it — long, furry ears, nose twitching, pink eyes? You have no doubt that it is an authentic rabbit? Neither have I. But I wasn't watching the rabbit, because I know how the trick is done: while you and all the other suckers were watching the rabbit, I was watching the conjuror

moving about the audience and relieving the customers of their wallets, their necklaces, their briefcases and — given time — the lino and the lamp-brackets.

In the Profiles catalogue for 1990-1, most of the items could be claimed, with no more ado, if the customer had enough points; by my count, there were 97 such items. In the case of the remaining ones (I made it 44), a sum of money was in addition required, and the bigger the points total, the bigger the extra

cash sum. But out of these 44 items carrying the impost, a choice was offered: the chooser could elect to take the covered thing and pay the extra, or could reject the money price and go on until the rest of the required points were earned. In my count, the number of those choices was 20.

Since nobody was compelled to fork out money, the grand total of items which could be "bought" for points and points alone, was 117, with only 24 requiring an inescapable money extra.

Come with me to the 1991-2 Profiles catalogue. There you will find that the choice option is no longer offered; if there is a price-tag on the item you want, you must pay the extra cash, and cannot go on until you have collected more points to get it cash-free. Moreover, by my count, the number of items carrying a cash penalty is 93, and the number that are cash-free is 36 — as opposed, I would remind you, for the previous year's total of cash-free 117 and cash-laden 24.

Now estimate, to 15 places of decimals, the depth of greed which Barclaycard can reach to milk their customers. Remember, a point-collector gets one point for every £10 spent, so to get something for 1,000 points there will have been £10,000 of expenditure. And that gigantic balance is not enough for them; they must have found in the first year that the millions they were taking in had to be put in the scales against a pin, whereupon, with infinite skill, they have sawn off the pin's head.

Over the centuries, there have been many naive attempts to curb or even abolish rapacious usury, and all have failed. It's probably a waste of time, but I'll find the time if you will. Let's have one more try.



...and moreover
CRAIG BROWN

Yesterday, I joined the queue in the village butcher's. Everyone seemed strangely guarded, even defensive. "And what will you be having, madam?" the butcher asked the woman at the front. "A nice lamb chop, perhaps — or haven't you decided?"

"Of course I've decided. My position on the matter in question has always been crystal clear. It's only my opponents who try to claim otherwise. And that's because they're running scared she barked back.

"So you'd like a lamb chop?" "That's not what I said at all. You're putting words into my mouth. I'd like you to withdraw that remark. It's a vicious calumny got up by my opponents."

Eventually, the butcher apologised, the irate woman walking away with a string of sausages, muttering all the while that she had been badly misrepresented.

"Dear, oh, dear," muttered the butcher to the next person in the queue, a man in a hat. "She's been like that ever since the political parties began their electioneering."

"Like what?" said the man in the hat.

"Well... you know... prickly." "Why shouldn't she be? That's what I'd like to know. There's no reason why she should let you ride roughshod over her. No reason at all!" raged the man in the hat. "In my opinion, her buying policy has remained utterly consistent, no matter what her opponents might throw at her."

"But I heard her state unequivocally when she came into the shop that she was going to buy two chickens," she shouted a man at the back of the queue. "Then when she had got halfway up the queue, she had changed it — within my hearing — to a pound of pig's liver. Then she denied that she was going to have a lamb chop. And what does she walk away with? A string of sausages?"

By now, the whole queue was in uproar, shopper taking sides against shopper in a barrage of accusation and counter-accusation. Ever since the run-up to the general election succeeded the run-up to the run-up to the general election, everyone in the village has become a mite edgy, and the slightest little thing can set them off.

A lady with a basket leapt to the defence of the lady with the sausages. "Yes," she said, "she bought sausages because the world situation had changed by the time she reached the front of the queue. There's nothing inconsistent in that, nothing at all! It's adapting to circumstances."

All those *Question Times* and *Newsnight* have been taking their toll. These days, everyone in the village has to occupy an unassailable position on every topic. Caution and aggression are their watchwords. Personally, I told the butcher, I could come to terms with it if only they didn't smile quite so much.

"It's that Tony Blair," the butcher whispered to me, "always smiling, even when he's discussing proposed percentage

increases to National Insurance contributions. And now all my customers are at it, smile, smile, morning, noon and night. Frankly, I can't wait for the election to be over, so they'll stop grinning and start looking sullen again. Next!"

"Couple of pounds of rump steak," said a sweet old lady.

"Couple of pounds of rump steak — certainly, madam."

"You misquoted me," said the sweet old lady.

"I didn't misquote you," replied the butcher.

"I never said you did," snapped the sweet old lady.

The next customer, a man in a lightweight suit, had been influenced, I suspect, by endlessly watching Mr Michael Howard. "Yes, sir," said the butcher.

"What would you like to order?"

"That is, if I may say so, a ludicrous over-simplification of a very complex issue," replied the man in the lightweight suit, "and I would like to answer it, if I may, in three separate stages, taking account of a worldwide recession, the break-up of the Soviet Union, the single market and anything else that comes to hand. First, and let me make this quite clear, I have no doubt at all that... an hour and a half later, he had agreed that what he really wanted was six lambs' kidneys and a pork pie, a decision which started hoots of derision from behind. As I write, there are only two ahead of me in the queue. I now think that I may well order a duck, but only if changing world circumstances permit it."

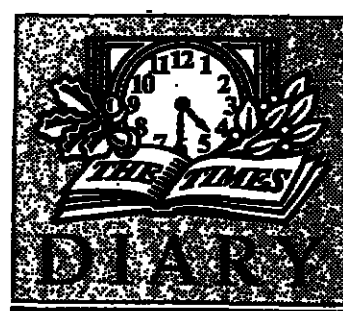
Not us, brother

FOR the first time in more than 65 years, the Labour leadership is set to boycott Transport House during the general election campaign in an attempt to shed its trade union image. Ever since Labour moved into the headquarters of the Transport and General Workers' Union in 1926, Labour leaders, from Ramsay MacDonald to Jim Callaghan have launched their election propaganda from Transport Hall, the ground floor conference hall in the TGWU headquarters.

Even after Labour moved out of the TGWU building in 1980, Michael Foot in 1983 and Neil Kinnock in 1987 held their London press conferences there. Kinnock also used the hall during the 1989 European election campaign.

The planned move is designed to counter Tory allegations that Labour is in the pocket of the unions. Yet the abandonment of Transport House will prove inconvenient to everyone. As it sits opposite Tory Central Office in Smith Square, for years Labour and Tory officials have held bipartisan meetings in advance of elections to agree a timetable which allows journalists to stroll the 50 yards across the road as the press conference immediately followed the other.

The Methodist Central Hall in Westminster confirmed yesterday that it had been approached as an alternative venue. The Queen Elizabeth II conference centre has been rejected as too expensive and Labour's Walworth Road offices are too distant. But the TGWU seemed unaware that it had been snubbed. "We are more than happy to make our facilities available," said a spokesman.



● The Queen has achieved the unthinkable: she has shifted the BBC's Nine O'Clock News from its sacrosanct spot to make way for a programme on her 40th anniversary next month. Only football matches and party political broadcasts have previously managed the feat. Mark Damazer, editor of the Nine O'Clock News, says: "I can't think of any time when a pre-recorded programme has moved us. We will make the most of the extra time to ensure the 9.50 News is more up to date than ever."

In a state

LEADING citizens of the former county of Rutland are uniting to declare a state of UDI. The Duke of Rutland, Lord King and Lady Ruddle, whose family founded the Ruddles brewery chain, are at the head of a campaign to re-establish the lost county by restoring "You are now entering historic Rutland" signs at every border crossing. Lady Ruddle, whose late husband Sir Kenneth led the opposition to the original 1974 boundary changes, which abolished Rutland by absorbing it into Leicestershire, says: "Many of the original signs were stolen by souvenir hunters. We want them back."

man of Leicestershire county council, the Duke says he has no doubt where his loyalty lies. "I am very much in favour of Rutland having its independence restored. I always use Rutland, not Leicestershire, on envelopes."

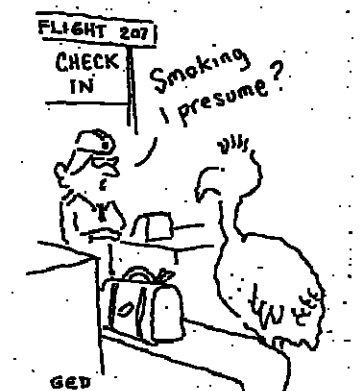
The Duke's successors on the county council have not given official approval to the signs, a drawback the campaigners have no intention of allowing to stand in their way. Lord King, the chairman of British Airways, who lives locally, says: "No one in Rutland has ever recognised that it was not Rutland." A fundraising effort has been launched and the next step will be a campaign for a new post code. "At the moment we are LE15. We want RU1," says Alan Duncan, the Tory prospective parliamentary candidate for Rutland and Melton. Indeed, the desired postcode has become almost a password among true Rutlanders: "Are you one?"

Heads together

BRITAIN'S former European commissioners meet today for a rare old boys' reunion. The exclusive club will be headed by Lord Jenkins of Hillhead, president of the commission from 1977 to 1981, who will be joined by Lord Clinton-Davis, Lord Richard and Sir Christopher Tugendhat. Somewhat unenthusiastically, they will discuss the future of Europe. The present commissioners, Sir Leon Brittan and Bruce Millard, will also join the distinguished club when they grace a dinner. Jenkins is planning for July. "We have a common identity although we don't defend the commission at all costs," says Clinton-Davis. And what is the collective noun used to describe such a gathering of former commission heavyweights? In the best EC traditions, it can only be a mountain.

Taking wing

THE dodo took to the air this week, a feat the creature never managed even before it became extinct 330 years ago. The bird flew 7,000 miles to Mauritius after Edinburgh's National Museum of Scotland agreed to restore the bones to the bird's native island. The skeleton was reconstructed from bones discovered in a



Mauritian swamp more than 100 years ago. Peter Summers from the museum spent eight weeks rebuilding the bird and is now in Mauritius with his creation to research further endangered species, such as the pink pigeon and the Mauritius kestrel. The need to save them is, indeed, desperate. "Dead as a pink pigeon" just does not have the same ring.

● April is the cruellest month, in T.S. Eliot's words, which may explain why there has not been an April election this century. But congratulations to Kenneth Clarke for perhaps the first honest answer on the timing of the election: "I hope the prime minister hasn't made his mind up and that he is not reading the newspapers for clues."



A DATE IN MAY

The general election should be held on May 7. No further purpose is served by delaying a decision on the date. With the next Budget set for March 10, the last significant piece in the electoral jigsaw has now been put in place. April is too soon after the Budget and has severe poll-tax drawbacks for the Tories. Any date later than May would mean an intolerable delay. Even were the opinion polls to advise throughout April, it is hard to believe that Tory managers would dare postpone in the hope of an improvement by June.

Unless he quickly ends the uncertainty, John Major is in danger of earning himself a reputation as a procrastinator. He toyed with a post-Gulf election and ducked it. He flirted seriously with a November election, and ducked that. Now speculation intensifies daily. In Sunday's papers he has decided for April; in Monday's, he favours May; in Wednesday's, he leans to April; and so on in an ever more wearisome round. Most of these stories are tenuously based, on corridor gossip, wishful thinking and backbench speculation. Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary, was refreshingly honest yesterday when he said nobody had any idea when Mr Major would run but he would himself favour a later date than April.

Apart from the nearly hysterical analysis of yawning opinion polls, there is no further information to assist Mr Major in choosing between April and May. Certainly there is some risk that "movements" in European interest rates may put pressure on the pound, but the government would do everything it could to avoid raising rates before the election anyway.

For the present it is unlikely to cut them. The only room for manoeuvre on the economic front is in the Budget, and any generosity then would, on the experts' view, yield a more solid electoral return if it were allowed to sink in for two months before polling day. A quick tax-cutting Budget immediately before an election campaign

would be unifying and counter-productive. To be sure, an April date would bring governmental uncertainty to an earlier conclusion. The year-old election campaign has all but paralysed much of Whitehall as ministers and officials are unable either to plan unpopular measures, or even to predict when they can resume planning them. All eyes are fixed on one thing, the government's chances of re-election. But most unsettling has been uncertainty over the date itself.

There are sound practical reasons for the May date. April would almost certainly kill the bill now before Parliament to abolish the poll tax and introduce the council tax. This whole gory process would have to be resumed after the election. For the Tories, April 9 happens also to be the week that 1992 poll tax bills start to arrive. The electorate would be painfully reminded on the eve of polling that the Tories have not yet succeeded in abolishing the tax, and to soften the blow they might be tempted into a further subsidy.

An election held in May would be less dominated by the politics of the pocket book. Other important issues would get a look in: defence, health, education, devolution and local government. May 7 is also the date of the local elections and its choice would ensure a higher turnout for those elections, which would be desperate affairs if held a month after a full-blown general election.

The prime minister may hesitate to announce a date for fear that the nation will not tolerate so long-drawn-out a battle. But a formal announcement will make little difference to a campaign that is already nearly a year old. Certainly as to the date, and the prospect of a further three months of government, should calm nerves. The press and broadcasters might lose interest in reporting gimmicks and calumnies. The politicians could settle to a steadier pace, ahead of the final sprint. The electorate could then return a more mature verdict than the present exchange of vacuous unpleasantities appears to permit.

NO EMPTY TALK

The Washington international conference on aid to the former Soviet Union has no obvious goal or function. The Europeans see it as a public relations ploy by an embattled Bush administration. Most Third World countries attending are either too poor or too remote to play any useful role. And the 11 countries whose views are of paramount importance—Russia and the other republics—have not been invited. The Group of Seven industrialised nations and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have already discussed emergency aid exhaustively. Do the Europeans mean again in Washington with little prospect of international co-ordination and no time to get anything moving before the end of the Russian winter?

They do not, but now the meeting has started, it should not be wasted. Only now is the world discovering the truth of what Britain has been saying for over a year: that pouring money and food into the Soviet Union is like pouring resources into a bottomless pit. Without the most rigorous supervision, well-intentioned donations are diverted straight to the black market. Consignments of food rot in warehouses while obstinate bureaucrats bicker and selfish lorry drivers demand their cut. Exasperated donor countries need to reassess the scale of the need and the limits of Western intervention.

As well as bringing home to a reluctant American public the message that feeding the Russians is as strategic to Western interests as was confronting their former military might, the conference usefully points up the gap between pledges and performance. Western bureaucracy looks almost as cumbersome as that in the East. Of the \$2.4 billion in aid promised by the EC, only about a tenth has so far been delivered. The Americans, who have promised slightly more, have delivered even less. The Japanese have delivered nothing, despite a commit-

ment of \$2.6 billion and the consensus at last year's G7 summit that humanitarian aid was politically urgent.

Though it was not supposed to be a pledging event, President Bush's announcement of an extra \$645 million is clearly designed to elicit similar promises from some of the other 47 countries taking part. But the point is not to raise more money, obtain renewed commitments from President Yeltsin to reform, or reaffirm the West's will to sustain democracy and freedom—welcome though these may be. The foreign ministers and experts must confront the corruption and mismanagement in Russia and the republics, enhance bilateral aid, and speed up Russian membership of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and other world bodies used to wading through economic quagmires.

The working groups must get down to details: should food aid be sold or donated? Should others follow France in adopting shops in big cities and loading up their own lorries and drivers on transport planes? Can Nato troops be used to guard the food convoys? Who would organise an auction of EC food? Even, do lorries need to carry satellite dishes to prevent their being hijacked?

This conference cannot draw up an international Marshall plan. It should not involve itself with requests for a stabilisation fund: that is the job of the IMF, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other standing agencies. It cannot do much at this stage to assuage the anger and anguish of the millions queuing in the snow for bread. It will not overcome in two days the differences of view between Europeans and Americans. What it can do is focus world attention on the shambles in the East, and strengthen the West's commitment to the viability of a democracy which it has so long sought.

SOCIABLE TRENDS

"Whatever happened to collective values?" was the plaint so often heard from the left during the Thatcher years. The walls were matched by those from the right lamenting the decline of family values. Both sides will claim that their fears are justified by the 1992 edition of *Social Trends*, out yesterday. Both would be wrong.

At first glance, society does seem to have atomised. More and more Britons are living alone: single people now make up 26 per cent of all households compared with just 12 per cent in 1961. There are more one-parent families—nearly a fifth of the total—though most are the result of divorce, separation or death rather than choice. Twenty-eight per cent of babies are now born outside marriage (up from 5 per cent in 1960), but most are registered by both parents, ready to give the child a stable home.

Though Britain has the second-highest divorce rate in the EC, it also has the second-highest rate for marriages. All too easily a picture can be drawn of old people forced to live alone, youngsters deserting their parents, couples splitting up and living separately, children being brought up by only one adult. The facts do not always support such a view. Even where they do, this does not mean that Britain is turning into an increasingly selfish, introspective and solitary society.

More people may live alone but, perhaps as a result, they seem to be choosing to spend more time away from home with other people. A higher percentage of British men either work or want to work than in any other EC country, while in this respect British women are beaten only by Denmark. In their spare time, their pursuits are returning to the communal. Though television watch-

ing is still the most popular home-based leisure activity, the number of hours watched is falling. Visiting or entertaining friends or relations comes second.

Meanwhile, despite the increasing popularity of the video cassette recorder (in 60 per cent of all households now), cinema attendance, another collective activity, is rising. Sixty-four per cent of people saw a film in a cinema last year, compared with just 38 per cent in 1984. Attendance at football matches is also picking up, especially in Scotland where the number going to premier division games has risen by almost half in the past ten years. This may be because the one collective activity now in decline in Britain is football hooliganism.

On days out, gregarious visits to friends or relations are by far the most popular activity, easily surpassing sightseeing, culture or sport. Granny may live alone, but she does not want for company. For tourist attractions, nothing can beat the British seaside, the most sociable place to have fun. Blackpool Pleasure Beach tops the league table of free attractions, with the Palace Pier in Brighton and the Pleasure Beach at Great Yarmouth not far behind.

Perhaps the best indication of a society's values is the number of people prepared to give up time to help others for no financial reward. A quarter of women and a fifth of men take part in voluntary work. The most startling rise is in the number volunteering for those most perilous of activities: sea, mountain and cave rescue. What better measure could there be of individual altruism towards the community than that people should be ready to risk their lives for the sake of complete strangers?

Why Algeria is wary of the West

From Mr Charles Foster

Sir, The French have kept surprisingly quiet about the recent events in Algeria. And they are quite wise to do so. Any comments from Paris would be met by embarrassing and offensive rejoinders from Algiers.

French treatment of the huge expatriate Algerian population in France has contributed significantly to the feeling of many Algerians that alliance with and integration into the West is impossible.

It is not long since France was proclaiming that its territory extended from Dunkirk to Tamarassat. Algerian workers came to France with high aspirations and all their money, hoping that the things which France had said about itself during the long occupation would prove true. They hoped for tolerance, opportunity and judgment on their merits. They found instead occasional washing up jobs in Marseilles restaurants and a frightening tide of racism which kept them pinned in their ghettos.

The word got back to Algeria that this was the best they could expect from the liberal, democratic West, and reactionary Islam smiled at the discontent.

The West is worried by the success of Islam. The most practical way of nipping in the bud all the little irons which are springing up in the soil left fallow by retreating Western empires is to show that democracy can do what its rhetoric says it should for the racial minorities in the West.

France has signally failed to set an example. The blame for the Algerian fracas can be laid, in part, at France's door. And the lesson for Britain is obvious.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES FOSTER,
11 King's Bench Walk,
Temple, EC4.
January 20.

From Mr S. Shahid Salam

Sir, The multi-party elections in Algeria have drawn a spate of articles and editorials in the Western press (including *The Times*, January 13), condemning the Islamic Salvation Front. While the West clamours for multi-party democracy in Kenya, it is not too pleased with the results of similar polls in Algeria, making it quite obvious that it is not the system under attack but the outcome.

Following the demise of communism in the erstwhile Soviet bloc, the West's fate compass is now pointing squarely at the Muslim world. Why? Because they refuse to espouse Western values: Night clubs and brothels, alcoholism, countless millions of children born out of wedlock and broken homes, pornography and permissiveness (and now AIDS) are all part of the Western cultural scene.

Is it essential for the West to impose all of its values on the Muslims, who are branded as fundamentalists for their refusal to convert to a godless society?

Yours faithfully,
S. SHAHID SALAM,
Stackvägen 45,
Sollemtuna, Sweden.
January 17.

NHS funding

From Professor Neil Kessel

Sir, Your report (January 6) that a regional health authority is considering reducing funding to areas where many people have private health insurance, on the basis that demand for NHS services would be lower, indicates the topsy-turvy thinking of managers.

The main reason for subscribing to private health-care schemes is the poor quality of NHS provision. Logic, therefore, would point to the need to provide more facilities, not fewer, where many have been driven to seek private care. It is cynical to reduce health service provision so as to stimulate the growth of private schemes and then proclaim that even less NHS provision is justified.

Yours faithfully,
NEIL KESSEL,
24 Lees Road, Bramhall,
Stockport, Cheshire.

Patient care?

From Mr E. M. Hall

Sir, "Pets including dogs, cats, horses and birds are being allowed in wards at the George Eliot Hospital at Nuneaton, Warwickshire, to cheer up their sick owners" (report, January 13).

But what if the animals cause anxiety, or irritation or actual physical harm to other patients?

Yours faithfully,
E. M. HALL,
6 Fair Mile, Henley on Thames,
Oxfordshire.

Rejected children

From the Director of the National Children's Bureau

Sir, As Kenneth Clarke leads us towards his tortuous wonderland where 90 per cent of children achieve above average results, it is easy to forget about those who do not.

The world of the parent's charter risks proving itself pretty inhospitable for some of our most needy young people—unmarketable commodities in a school system in which academic success is becoming all.

What is to happen to the child that no school wants to know—the child

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Quality of EC officials questioned

From Sir Michael Ogden, QC

Sir, One reason why many people in this country do not want greater power to be invested in the EC is that the Commission is perceived as being arrogant and inept. Certainly, there is an appearance given of instructions (by whatever name) being issued without proper consultation or sensible thought, followed in many cases by a climb-down when angry but reasoned clamour arises.

This is a deplorable situation which needs to be remedied. The responsibility lies with the European Commissioners and the Commission's civil servants. The question arises, are we and the other EC countries sending first-rate people to fill these posts?

As to commissioners, it cannot be disputed that, too often, we have not nominated first-rate people. (Those who would say, and rightly so, that Sir Leon Brittan is of the right calibre should remember that he would not be a commissioner had he not resigned from the government following the Westland dispute.)

As to civil servants, I have been told that there are not satisfactory promotional inducements to encourage high-fliers to do a stint in Brussels. There are precedents of long standing whereby people are asked to undertake jobs on the understanding that afterwards they will be offered significant promotion—e.g., Queen's Bench and Chancery Treasury counsel, who are appointed

high court judges thereafter. Only such inducements will cause a sufficient number of our ablest civil servants to agree to go to Brussels.

Of course, this is not a problem for this country alone. Some commissioners nominated by other countries are patently not of the required stature. While taking the necessary steps ourselves, we should endeavour to persuade others to do likewise. It is in everyone's interest that the Commission should be and appear to be competent.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL OGDEN,
2 Crown Office Row,
Temple, EC4.
January 13.

From Mr Ben Patterson, MEP for Kent West (European Democrat (Conservative))

Sir, Your Diary item on the power of a House of Commons select committee to summon European Community Commissioners before it (January 14) quoted "a Eurospokeswoman" as saying: "The Commissioner is not responsible to national parliaments". That is correct. But he is responsible to the European parliament, which has the power to dismiss him together with his colleagues. This is exactly as it should be.

Yours faithfully,
BEN PATTERSON,
As from Elm Hill House,
Hawkhurst, Kent.
January 14.

Need for action on historic houses

From Mr John Engleheart

Sir, Lord Camos in his letter (January 11) makes valuable points in support of Lord Shelburne, to whose lucid and impassioned argument we members of the Historic Houses Association listen with admiration. Unfortunately neither the government nor, in particular, the Chancellor seems to have ears or conscience.

A historic house is the titular property of its owner, but the law as it stands treats him as a mere incumbent on sufferance. Arguable though this may be in terms of eternity it will not in practice put one slate on a roof or sustain a crumbling cornice.

"Part of our national heritage" may sound fine, but where is the equity when the nation says, "Owner you may technically be, but if you fail in its upkeep the state can clasp an order on you, with dire consequences should you be unable to comply. But we will contribute nothing to that maintenance either positively or by relief of tax."

Even as to structural repairs the owner must queue up for the rare grants which, even when conferred, cover only a portion of the cost.

As Lord Camos points out, time was when private revenue accruing to historic mansions from the lands around them could in some instances be siphoned off towards the upkeep of the architectural fabric at the centre. This is no longer possible. However, the nation still expects our part of its heritage to be maintained

free and gratis. The situation, as Lord Shelburne has made dramatically clear by statistics, is that unless immediate action is taken (niggardly concessions will not suffice) even more of the country's stock of noble, lovingly preserved and lived-in homes will be dissipated.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN ENGLEHEART,
Kinkell Hall, Bewdley,
Worcestershire.

From Mr Anthony Jaggard

Sir, Lord Camos writes pertinently about the problems facing important historic houses open to the public. There are, however, a great many more historic houses and other buildings which are uneconomic or impractical to open to the public whose owners are actively discouraged from repair and maintenance by the present application of 17½ per cent VAT on such works.

If this is contrary to what I believe government policy to be—that historic buildings should be protected—and if it is impossible to introduce new zero rates under EC rules, is it also impossible, particularly at this time when such encouragement would be useful to the building industry and the economy, in general, for repairs and maintenance to listed buildings to be treated at a nominal 2½ per cent VAT? It would be good for the economy and for the environment.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY JAGGARD,
Winfrith Court,
Winfrith Newburgh, Dorset.

Running London

From the Chairman of the London Boroughs Association

Sir, The Lord Mayor of London's call (report, later editions, January 10) for co-operation and partnership for the benefit of London by and with the existing agencies and structures, rather than embarking upon an unnecessary local government reorganisation, is to be warmly welcomed. So is his call for the local authority associations representing the 32 boroughs and the City to join forces.

This association has always regretted the decision of most of the Labour-controlled authorities in 1985 to break away from the LBA and form their own association (the Association of London Authorities). Our invitation to them to return has always been, and remains, on the table.

It is unfortunate that the ALA has

not responded positively to the Lord Mayor. Labour's aim to recreate the Greater London Council and abolish the Lord Mayor and City Corporation (in spite of its valuable contribution, not just in the square mile but over London as a whole) takes precedence over the interests of London.

The public should remember this when Labour claims to be fit to govern London; and they may also reflect on the validity or otherwise of Labour's claim that a new GLC would be "lean and hungry," bearing in mind that the cost to chargepayers in London whose authorities are in membership of the all-party LBA is £28,200 p.a., compared with some £86,000 a year for the all-Labour ALA.

Yours faithfully,
P. BOWNESS, Chairman,
London Boroughs Association,
23 Buckingham Gate, SW1.
January 14.

Sound of silence

From Mr I. W. Bell

Sir, Philip Howard's article, "Winter's slippery slope" (January 17), has reminded me of an occasion more than 60 years ago when I was skiing with my father at Alpe d'Huez. In the winter of 1930-1 it consisted of nothing but a *Club Alpin* hut, which was firmly closed, and the only accommodation available was at Huez.

To get to the alp, we had to trudge carrying our skis up to this hut, at the bottom end of a broad slope of virgin snow. We herring-boned our way up through almost thigh-deep snow to the top of the alp, where we stood utterly alone and for about five minutes speechless gazing at the

prospect of the Meije dominating the valley below. Then my father said something, and I realised that for the first time in my life I had experienced complete silence.

I did, many years later, have a similar experience in the South Australian outback. Having read Mr Howard's article (and also an earlier one about the situation at Söll in Tirol) I cannot but wonder where in this world, apart perhaps from the Poles and some areas of Siberia, it will ever be possible to "hear" absolute silence again.

Yours truly,
IAN BELL,
44 Fisher Lane,
Bingham, Nottinghamshire.

Mr Clarke now provides the coup de grace. Elite schools, defined by their exam results and their truancy rates, will be resourced to undertake teacher training. Our inner-city schools, bantling to rise above the surrounding social and environmental squalor, will have little chance. They will once again become the sink schools, rejected by society, like the children who attend them.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN REA PRICE,
Director,
National Children's Bureau,
8 Wakley Street, EC1.
January 20.

Survey of views about trials

From Mrs Sarah McCabe

Sir, Your legal correspondent reports (January 13) that the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice has instituted a survey, to be carried out in all crown court areas, of the views of jurors, judges, defendants and their lawyers about the trials in which they have just taken part.

This startling but welcome piece of consumer research deserves the fullest support. Professor Zander, a member of the commission, is an old hand at jury research but only the existence of the royal commission has made possible so wide a survey of jury functioning and jury opinion.

Even more important, however, is the attempt to find the views of defendants about the working of the system in which they have become enmeshed. Earlier studies of crown court trials have suggested that a plea of not guilty does not always involve denial of involvement in the criminal act which is at issue in the trial.

Indeed, the majority of defendants admit that they have played some part in it but claim that their intention was not negligent or malicious; in a word, it was not criminal. We do not know for sure how frequently, over the whole country, defendants admit the act but deny the intention. If we did, we might reconsider the kind of evidence which would guide the jury to a fair decision.

The questions which they must consider in these cases are not about fingerprints (DNA or other), alibis, identification and all the stuff of popular crime stories. They must make an assessment of the general character and habits of the man or woman who stands before them and upon this assessment decide whether the charges on the indictment are criminal or not. Let us hope that Professor Zander's survey will include a question about the nature of the defendant's plea.

Yours faithfully,
SARAH MCCABE,
1 Stoke Place,
Old Headington, Oxford.

Luxor landscape

From Mr and Mrs Stuart Carter

Sir, Sadly, we can but endorse the views of Messrs Lee-Faulkner and Peake (letter, January 22) about the desecration of the west bank of the Nile at Luxor by new roads. On our own recent visit, we were appalled to see the changes wrought in the months since our 1990 stay in the same area.

In conversation with local residents, it is obvious they also fear the likely repercussions. Given the current construction of a bridge over the Nile south of Luxor, which will soon give immediate road access to the west bank—rather than having the pleasure of a leisurely crossing of the river by boat—they worry about the lives of their children and livestock.

The villagers are used to single-track roads with relatively slow-moving traffic, not the fast passage of large tour buses which will seek to move as many tourists as possible, as quickly as possible, from one site to another.

We fear that the new roads will also increase the pace of the deterioration of the very monuments they bring people to see. The vibration of the heavier, faster traffic these roads allow could cause many tombs and temples to subside and disappear.

Yours faithfully,
STUART CARTER,
GLENYS CARTER,
50 Cherry Hill,
Barnet, Hertfordshire.

Sullivan and Gilbert

From Mr Stephen Turnbull

Sir, Mr Crowther (letter, January 13) is ill-informed regarding Gilbert's anniversary in 1986. It was marked by an exhibition at the British Museum, a gala concert in London, a new production of *Iolanthe* by Scottish Opera and a two-day symposium in Massachusetts, and the Sir Arthur Sullivan Society devoted a full issue of its journal that year to studies of Gilbert.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN TURNBULL,
Cockfield House,
48 Front Street, Cockfield,
Bishop Auckland, Co Durham.

All is revealed

From Mr J. D. Richard

Sir, With reference to Philip Howard on compound subjects (... and moreover, January 18), there was, in the 1960s, in the gentlemen's lavatory in the Old Bodleian Library, Oxford, a printed notice which stated, in large letters, "Smoking", and then, in much smaller letters, "and the striking of matches" and continued "is prohibited in all parts of the library buildings".

Somebody had scored out "is" and written "are". Somebody else had scored out "are" and added "Paraphrasing subject—verb in the singular".

Yours faithfully,
JAMES RICHARD,
24 Cavendish Road,
Henleaze, Bristol, Avon.

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Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number—(071) 782 5046.

Misdirected in the desert



The Gulf Between Us

West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds

FOR those of us who feel that controversy and the theatre have been too much strangers of late, this promised to be an exciting evening. Here was Trevor Griffiths, the brightest of our far-left dramatists, turning to the Gulf war for his first major play since *Comedians* in 1975. The Leeds press had damned him in advance for giving comfort to Saddam; local British Legion members had mounted a mini-demonstration outside the theatre; and he himself had publicly suggested that Desert Storm was a racist outrage: "a crushing, horrific, punitive, exemplary war", to quote the programme, "handed to Arabs by the western alliance for reasons and values that don't stand up to the most cursory scrutiny".

Promises, promises. Nobody who expects a good, robust debate with Griffiths will find him a curiously elusive combatant. Certainly, he has found no satisfactory way of expressing his ire, let alone justifying it. There are moments in the second half when a distraught doctor is allowed directly to let rip about her city's bombing. But the first act shuffles pretty indolently along; and the piece as a whole is more weakened than enriched by Griffiths's attempts to push the proceedings in odd, unrealistic directions. He calls it "a kind of dream-play": not the most convincing of theatrical forms, nor the most confident way of describing it.

Hayden Griffin provides a splendid set, part building and part bombastic rubble, mud, concrete girders giddily

askew and, looming over the stage, a huge, holed mosque. This is what a pair of Britons are required by their gun-toting hosts to repair, for reasons that gradually become apparent without being altogether clear. It would seem that inside are the bodies of children killed while hiding in what everybody, Iraqi and pilot, knew was both a military installation and a shelter. Quite why Saddam's lackeys should cover up this atrocity rather than exploiting it, as they did after Amriya, is one of the evening's mysteries; but here they are actually prepared to shoot anybody who knows anything about it.

One of the builders is Paul Slack's fly Ryder, who stayed in Iraq in the

minutes at a time; they have to sit still, because the play is set in the Keller yard where family and neighbours gather, chat, argue, establishing the uneasy feeling that all is not well. The words they speak indicate this, but the change of expression is vital. Bannen sits with his face invisible to a quarter of the audience. Matthew Marsh claws up Chris's war memories with a moving passion, but his features are invisible to another quarter. Perhaps the characters should all be sunbathing, lying flat on their backs.

The women, more restless, show themselves to us. But, when tragedy strikes them rigid, loss occurs again. As Joe's wife, Kate, Marjorie Yates indicates the anguish taking its toll on a life of pretence. And I daresay that her final quiet despair stirs the hearts

of those in the audience fortunate enough to be sitting that side of the arena stage. Over on our side, we could only take it for granted. In a play so carefully crafted to expose what has been hidden, this frustration is infuriating.

Such faults are made the more upsetting because of the good things the production does contain — significantly often when the actors are moving about. Amanda Boxer's dry sarcasm, as a neighbouring wife, David Westhead's riveting performance as the son of Joe's imprisoned partner, shaking with rage and shock, but these are moments only in a production that has spoiled Miller's intricate machine.

JEREMY KINGSTON

All my Sons

Young Vic

DAVID THACKER has rendered Arthur Miller good service in recent years, but his latest production does a disservice to a mighty play. The action should advance with the steady, unstoppable movement of an infernal machine that has been built by its eventual victim. Once set going, there is only one way such a machine can stop: by announcing the name of its maker for all to hear, and exploding.

The faltering motion of this production may improve when Ian Bannen, playing Joe Keller, supplier of faulty

cylinder heads to fighter planes, becomes surer of his lines. In two of the crucial scenes with Chris, Joe's younger son — Larry, the elder, crashed in one of the planes — Bannen's hesitations and repetitions could not be disguised as the confusion of the character. His bull-like head and foxy smile fit the character; he lowers himself solidly on to a chair, and can put on the heavy charm of a rogue politician, but at two key moments of self-defence the machine pauses. Even his cry, "A father is a father" does not come from the heart. The momentum is lost.

But a more serious fault disqualifies this production. More obviously than any other example I can recall, it is an argument against theatre in the round. Characters sit still for ten

minutes at a time; they have to sit still, because the play is set in the Keller yard where family and neighbours gather, chat, argue, establishing the uneasy feeling that all is not well. The words they speak indicate this, but the change of expression is vital. Bannen sits with his face invisible to a quarter of the audience. Matthew Marsh claws up Chris's war memories with a moving passion, but his features are invisible to another quarter. Perhaps the characters should all be sunbathing, lying flat on their backs.

The women, more restless, show themselves to us. But, when tragedy strikes them rigid, loss occurs again. As Joe's wife, Kate, Marjorie Yates indicates the anguish taking its toll on a life of pretence. And I daresay that her final quiet despair stirs the hearts

of those in the audience fortunate enough to be sitting that side of the arena stage. Over on our side, we could only take it for granted. In a play so carefully crafted to expose what has been hidden, this frustration is infuriating.

Such faults are made the more upsetting because of the good things the production does contain — significantly often when the actors are moving about. Amanda Boxer's dry sarcasm, as a neighbouring wife, David Westhead's riveting performance as the son of Joe's imprisoned partner, shaking with rage and shock, but these are moments only in a production that has spoiled Miller's intricate machine.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Philharmonia/Sanderling

Festival Hall

WESTERN recognition of the veteran German conductor, Kurt Sanderling came late, and then only sporadically. A refugee from Nazi Germany, he fled east when most fled west — not a good career move, but it did allow him to spend two decades studying the Leningrad Philharmonic with the matchless Yevgeny Mravinsky. He then served a further 17 years conducting in East Berlin.

His career seems neatly mirrored by his style of music-making: Prussian discipline is allied to a surprisingly flexible interpretative approach. What Sanderling's performances do not provide is much sense of spontaneity, of players being inspired, hypnotised or terrified into producing something that surprises even themselves. In short, Sanderling never loses his head to his heart.

Rachmaninov's Third Symphony, however, is a work that benefits from a tightly controlled approach. For all its crackling energy, its predominant mood is dark and lean, with modal-tinged themes adding a whiff of religious ritual, recast under the blazing sunset of late romanticism.

CBSO/Rattle

Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CONSERVATIVE tendencies have always been evident in the music of Robin Holloway. One remembers with pleasure such works as *Scenes from Schumann* in the early 1970s, with its then shockingly unmodern tonal references. Times change, and new music has become less severe about what is admissible as part of its language. But Holloway has changed too, and on the evidence of this world premiere, given by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, not for the better.

The *Spacious Firmament* is a large-scale ode with a setting of Blake's "Auguries of Innocence" at its centre, intended to be the first music heard "officially" in Birmingham's new hall. For that reason, Holloway decided to make the sounds as accessible and immediately arresting as possible, and there are many superficially effective things.

Yet his response to the words neither enhances nor clarifies them. Indeed, much of the time his reactions seem automatic rather than thoughtful, the writing too direct, the

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20 REVIEWS

ART 92: Some 50 of the most innovative galleries in Britain are taking part in the annual contemporary art fair, now in its fifth year. The show mostly features current British art, though there is work exhibited by American galleries this year. As from next year, Art 92 will join forces with the London International Contemporary Art Fair held annually at Olympia.

WATERLOO GALLERY: Though Birmingham is famous for its holdings of pre-Raphaelite and other Victorian artists, it is not widely recognised that its Waterloo collection has few rivals in the country and is such a work of the 18th and 20th centuries. Japan has recently been enjoying an extended tour of 150 of Birmingham's finest examples and the exhibition has now stopped at the Bankside Gallery on the way home. The general quality is superb, and along with some very familiar pieces, there are some which will come fresh to almost everybody.

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TODAY'S EVENTS

THE SHADOW OF A GUNMAN: Paul Kavanagh directs the music play of Sean O'Casey's play on the life of the Irish Republic. Opening night, Haymarket Theatre, Belgrave Gate, Leicester (0533 58757), 7.30pm.

ROY AYERS: The Los Angeles vibraphonist and singer plays a three-week residency at Ronnie Scott's with his Afro-American fusion band. Providing support this week is the acoustic Merin Spoke quartet. Ronnie Scott's, 47, Firth Street, London W1 (071-438 0747), 8.30pm.

DIE FLEDERMAUS: Richard Jones's knockout version of the Johann Strauss operetta for English National Opera has all the paraphernalia that the show-biz impresario after the first 30 minutes. However, good performance from a strong cast: Vivian Tierney (Fledermaus) and Malcolm Donnelly (Fledermaus), with Rosemary Joshua taking over from Lalely Garrett to play the Madonna-like role of Adele. James Holmes conducts. Haymarket Theatre, Belgrave Gate, Leicester (0533 58757), 7.30pm.

SIMPLY RED: This week sees the band's first day in a prize-winner in the last 10 years. Assured white soulful Mick Hucknall showcases hits from the group's fourth album, *Stars*, its most successful to date. The group have few peers when it comes to delivering intelligent and heartfelt soul music and

has a knack for creating an intimate atmosphere in even the largest of venues. Wembley Arena, Wembley, Middlesex (081 900 1234), 8pm.

NEW WORLD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: Michael Tilson Thomas's Miami-based orchestra, founded in 1980 for musicians fresh out of American conservatories is on a British tour with two London performances to follow tomorrow and Sunday at the Barbican. In tonight's concert Tilson Thomas himself is soloist in Gershwin's Second Rhapsody which comes between Mozart's Symphony No 34 in C, K338, and Brahms's Symphony No 4.

PHILHARMONIA: Kurt Sanderling performs the same romantic role as the Philharmonia orchestra which Klaus Tennstedt regularly undertakes for the LPO, that of conducting Mahler. This time the work consists in the all-embracing Ninth Symphony, composed in 1909-10. Festival Hall, South Bank, London SE1 (071-928 8533), 7.30pm.

ANGELS IN AMERICA: Tony Kushner's play, subtitled "A Gay Farquhar on National Themes", focuses on two couples in crisis, and gay, one Mormon. Acclaimed in San Francisco last year, the play now returns to the British premiere at the National under the direction of Declan Donnell.

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ITV

BBC 2

6.00 TV-am (t30305894)
9.25 Keynotes Music quiz game for teams (357) **9.55 Thames News**
 (6747014)
10.00 The Time ... The Place ... Topical discussion series (589187)
10.40 This Morning Family magazine series Among today's items are
 family health, foretelling the future and knitting aids (3976033)
12.10 The Riddlers Puppet series for children (2953830)
12.30 News John Craxie. (Cracle) Weather (5636946) **1.10**
Thames News (4162)
2.10 Home and Away Australian family drama serial (Oracle)
 (69110659) **1.50 A Country Practice** Medical drama serial set in
 a small Australian outback town (s) (60979033)
2.20 TV Weekly Anne Diamond takes a look behind the scenes of
 popular TV and Channel 4 programmes (77666203) **2.50 Take the**
High Road More Highland dramas (6533675)
3.15 ITV Irish news headlines (4500162) **3.20 Thames News** live headlines
 (26547) **3.25 The Young Doctors** Drama about life in a large
 Australian city hospital (8659120)
3.55 Toucan Tics Animated adventures (s) (2169830) **4.05 Runaway**
Bay Adventure series set on the Caribbean island of Martinique
 (4592525) **4.35 Dangerous** Cartoon adventures of a secret
 service agent (5927143) With the voices of Terry Scott and David Jason
 (Cracle) (s) (5927143) **5.00 Cartoon** featuring Pepe Le Pew (r)
 (1484694)
5.10 Blockbusters General knowledge quiz game for teenagers
 presented by Bob Holness (5473694)
5.40 News with Carol Barnes. (Cracle) Weather (709507)
5.55 Thames Help Jackie Sprockley with details of the Spastics
 organisation, single parents and single holidays (394666)
6.00 Home and Away (r) (Cracle) (149)
6.30 Thames News. (Oracle) (101)
7.00 Emmerdale Drama serial set in the Yorkshire Dales. (Cracle)
 (6014)
7.30 Fresh Fields Comedy starring Julia McKenzie and Antonio
 Rogers The week circumstances from William to take Theresa
 and her mother see a tribian trip (to) (97740)

Confrontation: Carolyn Fiddes and Christopher Ellison (8.00pm)

8.00 The Bill: Dinosaurs. DI Burnside's unorthodox methods set him on a collision course with DCI Reck during an investigation into an abortive armed robbery at a supermarket. (Cracle) (5782)

8.30 The Week: At the Queen's Men. An investigation into the employment policies of the Queen's Men. Housheerd. Of 891 Royal employees only nine are from ethnic minorities and none of these are in senior positions. (Cracle) (4897)

9.00 Taggart. The concluding part of *Nest of Vipers* and Christine Gray. Dr Neilson's research assistant, suffers the same fate as her boss when she is bitten by a poisonous snake. Starring Mark McLennan as the eponymous Glasgow detective. (Cracle) (7894)

10.00 News at Ten with Tom and Mary. News and Sandra Armstrong. (Cracle) (6252)

10.40 Prisoner: Cell Block Thirteen. Australian drama series set in a women's remand centre (4818)

11.30 01. Includes Trevor McDonald reviewing Oliver Stone's controversial new film *JFK*; and a feature on Jack Good's new musical *Jack Good's Rockin' Tunes* (3127)

12.00 A Problem Arised. Viewers' emotional problems discussed by the panel.

12.30am Alfred Hitchcock Presents: The Big Spin. A dishonest cab driver keeps a passengers winning lottery ticket but he eventually won't he hadn't (8632B)

1.00 Film: How To Get Married (1968) starring Louis de Funès. Another in the comedy series about a bumbling St Tropez policeman. Directed by Jean Girault (20505)

2.40 The Twilight Zone: Wagon and Found Emporium. A tale of a man who is a fortune teller. (865415)

3.00 The Truth About Women. Eve Pollard talks to Carol Thatcher, Clare Short and Carol Reay about childlessness (37142)

3.30 Murphy's Law. Comedy drama series starring George Segal as an insurance claim investigator (r) (19325)

4.30 America's Top Ten (r) (a) (87601)

5.00 VideoAmerica: The fur industry (r) (r) (7798)

5.30 VideoAmerica: The fur industry (r) (r) (7798). Ends at 8.00.

[illegible][illegible]

Playing the villain of the piece Brenda Fricker (10.00pm)

10.00 Brides of Christ.

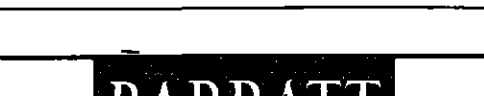
★ **CHOICE.** As the kindly nurse Megan in *Casualty*, Brenda Fricker plays everyone's shoulder to cry on. As Sister Agnes in this six-part Australian drama she comes across as playing a villain, a soul-reactionary holding back the forces of change. *Brides of Christ* is set in a Sydney convent in the 1960s, a decade of social and political upheaval. Tonight's episode focuses on Diane (Josephine Byrne) who is about to be married, has a last minute change of heart and decides to become a nun. With her friend Veronica (Lisa Harrow) who is also a nun, she collides with the unchangeable Sister Agnes. *Brides of Christ* is a decent, well-made series which undercuts any leaning towards gush with welcome injections of humour. With five more episodes to come the narrative is in no hurry but already there are ample clues to the youthful questioning of traditional ways that will provide the central theme. (Teletext 11) (S) (3/7/90)

11.05 Just For Laughs The first of a new series of highlights from the 1991 Montreal international comedy festival (750946)

11.40 Martin Niemöller The life story of the U-boat officer, turned pacifist and evangelical theologian in German with English

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THE TIMES BUSINESS

THURSDAY JANUARY 23 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

● BUSINESS NEWS 23-30
● HEALTH AND BEAUTY 31
● SPORT 32-36

TODAY IN BUSINESS

END OF AN ERROR



Sir Nicholas Goodison discovered that for every three people doing a job at the TSB, a fourth was checking their work and correcting mistakes. **Page 27**

EMULATION

Danish inflation is less than half that of Germany but the Danes do not mind having higher rates than the Germans. **Page 27**

GEMINATE



Nicholas Oppenheimer is emerging fast from the era in which South Africa was taboo in the Soviet Union, the world's other great diamond producing area. **Page 24**

LEP WARNING

Lep, the freight forwarding group, has warned its shareholders of write-offs on its American property interests. **Page 25**

TONIC



Patrick Egan opened Fisons' doors to City analysts yesterday, following the resignation of the previous chairman. **Comment, page 27**

Further syndicate losses expected

Gooda Walker members face extra £101 m bill

By JONATHAN PEYNN

THE 4,000 names on four loss-making Lloyd's syndicates formerly managed by the now defunct Gooda Walker agency have received demands for an additional £101 million and a warning that they should prepare themselves for further losses.

The cash calls bring losses on syndicates 164, 290, 298 and 299 to £238.4 million. Names have until March 2 to pay the cash calls, which average £20,000 each and relate to the 1989 and 1990 accounts.

The company managing the syndicates has appointed advisers to investigate the circumstances surrounding the placing of the policies that have led to the losses.

The latest cash calls come a week after the publication of the Rowland Task Force report on the future of Lloyd's. The report has been criticised for not including any proposals to help names suffering from heavy losses from past years.

The four Gooda Walker syndicates are among those hardest hit by the "excess of loss spiral" at Lloyd's, which was triggered by a series of catastrophes in the late Eighties, including Hurricane Hugo and the Exxon Valdez oil spill. Total "cash" calls amount to the audited deficiencies of the syndicates at the 1990 year end. The biggest losses have been suffered by syndicate 290, which had 3,165 members in 1988, and incurred a 132.25 per cent loss for 1989 and 88.6 per cent for 1990.

Ralph Sharp, the chairman

of GW Run-Off, a company appointed by the Council of Lloyd's to manage the winding up of the Gooda Walker syndicates, said that the cash calls were necessary because of pressure from the company's bankers to reduce the "substantial" borrowings taken on to finance "the sheer outflow of claims."

He added that the total losses on the four syndicates were likely to be in excess of those estimated by the Gooda Walker management and that further demands for cash could be made before the summer. All four of the syndicates have had their 1989 years of account left open. The Gooda Walker agency, which also managed three other syndicates not affected by the latest cash calls, went into liquidation last September.

Of the £137 million already called, about £21 million has not been paid. Alfred Doll-Steinberg, the chairman of the Gooda Walker Action Group, said he had been advised by counsel that the previous cash calls had been legally flawed and that names should not pay if they did not want to. He did not know whether this also applied to the latest cash call. Lloyd's has appointed its own review board to examine the Gooda Walker losses. To date, Lloyd's is not thought to have drawn down on deposits, including bank guarantees, lodged at the market or instituted legal action against non-paying Gooda Walker names.

GW Run-Off has sub-contracted the handling of the run-off of the syndicates to City Run-Off, a subsidiary of

the Bankside Group. More than 80 staff are working on the processing of claims and reinsurance recoveries relating to the Gooda Walker syndicates.

Mr Sharp added that GW Run-Off and City Run-Off have undertaken a thorough examination of the affairs of the syndicates which had identified "a number of specific matters... which are complex and require detailed analysis."

Mr Sharp would not comment on the nature of the issues being investigated, but the Gooda Walker Action Group has commissioned a legal opinion from Gavin Lightman QC, which said that many of the policies that have led to the losses may have been improperly placed. □ Lloyd's has appointed Sir Jeremy Morse, the chairman of Lloyds Bank, and a nominated member of the Council of Lloyd's to lead a working group into the controversial proposals on governance of the market included in the Rowland Task Force. David Rowland, who chaired the Task Force, will also be a member of the working party. The report's chapter on governance was initially rejected by the Council of Lloyd's.

□ The Japanese Ministry of Finance is considering granting Lloyd's a licence to conduct business in what is the world's second largest insurance market. A decision on the application is expected to be made later this year as part of a review of the laws regulating the Japanese insurance industry. Local officials are reported to have taken a positive attitude to Lloyd's setting up branches in Japan.



Built up company: Godfrey Bradman remains deputy chairman of Rosehaugh

Rosehaugh-Stanhope merger talks aborted

By MATTHEW BOND

SHARES in Rosehaugh, the troubled property group, fell to a new low of 4½p at one point yesterday after the company announced that its merger talks with Stanhope had been called off and that it was talking to its bankers.

However, they recovered slightly to close at 5½p, after the company expressed its confidence that a new agreement could be reached with its 28 banks. Six weeks ago, Rosehaugh revealed pre-tax losses of £227 million, had its accounts qualified and admitted that it had breached its banking covenants.

Godfrey Bradman, who built the company up into one of Britain's leading developers in the Eighties, also stepped down as chairman last month, although he continues as deputy chairman.

Rosehaugh, best known as joint developer of Broadgate in the City of London and a potential developer of the King's Cross Channel tunnel terminal, owes around £310 million to its banks. A standstill agreement expires at the end of this month.

Paul Rivlin, a director of Rosehaugh, rejected the idea that the company was facing a seven day deadline. He said discussions with the banks, co-ordinated by Barclays and NatWest, were continuing. "Everyone is expecting to make further progress by January 31."

Rosehaugh's latest problems come two years after SG Warburg put together a £125 million rights issue, designed to give the company the breathing space to make property disposals. However, with the market falling further and faster than anyone

imagined, disposals have been insufficient to stem the massive losses. December's losses followed losses of £165 million the year before.

Mr Rivlin said the called-off merger talks should have no impact on Rosehaugh's discussion with its banks. Although the proposed deal has always been referred to as a merger, it became clear that any deal would effectively involve the USM-quoted Stanhope taking over Rosehaugh. The most recent indications were that Stanhope would emerge with over 80 per cent of an enlarged group.

Comment, page 27

Diary, page 16

Builders' success puts pressure on Eurotunnel

By OUR CITY STAFF

EUROTUNNEL suffered a legal setback in the battle with the contractors building the £8 billion Channel tunnel over cost overruns yesterday when a judgment from the Court of Appeal overturned an earlier ruling and allowed the builders to down tools on one part of the contract, the installation of the cooling system.

The tunnel operator was playing down suggestions that the two sides were close to resolution of the long-running dispute. "It is premature to say a deal is close. It is not clear today whether, to what extent, or when the parties might reach an agreement," a statement said.

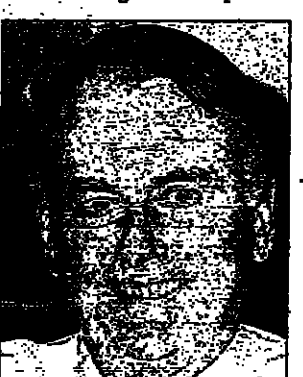
There was no indication, however, that any work on the tunnel would stop immediately. Eurotunnel said it was considering an appeal to the House of Lords, while Transmanche Link, the Anglo-French consortium, stressed that it was still keen to negotiate a settlement with Eurotunnel over the builders' claims on the contract to provide fixed equipment, now

standing at £1.27 billion.

The Court of Appeal overturned an earlier court judgment in Eurotunnel's favour by the High Court in November, saying it was outside the court's jurisdiction, and awarded costs to the builders.

Eurotunnel, whose chief executive is Sir Alastair Morton, said work was progressing on the contract, as were talks over cost overruns.

The latest victory for the builders in the complex legal skirmishing sent the price of



Sir Alastair: talks go on

Eurotunnel units back 12p to 443p.

The builders can now stop work on the cooling system if they wish to put further pressure on Eurotunnel, but this is only a small part of the original £620 million fixed equipment contract.

Asked if the consortium would now be downing tools on the cooling system, John Hamlen, head of communication services at TML, said: "I wouldn't have thought so. But it [the judgment] can't be seen to damage our prospects in any way."

The contractors said they were pleased at the Court of Appeal victory, but it "would not, however, stop TML from continuing to seek with Eurotunnel a solution to their existing disputes in order to ensure the earliest possible completion of the project."

The builders are claiming £650 million in overruns on the fixed equipment contract. Eurotunnel has provided for £448 million of this figure, but the two sides are still more than £200 million apart.

Greenalls hand over the pumps

By MARTIN WALLER

ONE of Britain's longest established members of the "beverage," the tight coterie of aristocrats that control much of the brewing industry, is handing over the reins of power.

The Greenall family has agreed to scrap the outdated two-tier share structure that has operated since their company, then called Greenall Whitely, came to the stock market in 1952. A complex scheme of enfranchisement is planned to give the holders of the limited voting stock full rights, raising the prospect of a hostile bid for the first time in the company's 230-year history. But the restructured management is more likely to use its new freedom to issue shares in pursuit of a big expansion programme. Once one of Britain's best-known regional brewers, the now-renowned Greenalls Group ceased brewing at Warrington, Cheshire, in 1990

and now concentrates on public houses, restaurants, hotels and off-licences.

The Greenall family, whose head is the third Baron Daresbury, will see its voting rights drop from 53 per cent to 17 per cent once the limited voting shares are enfranchised. In return it will benefit from a share issue that will give family members one new share, which has a par value five times that of existing shares and receives five times the dividends, for every two now held.

At the same time the family, motto *Alta Peto* or "I seek to rise," is selling about a fifth of its holdings for the benefit of family trusts, raising £25 million but retaining 24 million shares. A baronetcy existed in the family in Victorian times, but the first Baron Daresbury was ennobled in 1927 for services to agriculture — like many members of the beverage the Greenalls have close links with the land, and he was largely responsible for the creation

of the Royal Show. The family took the name Daresbury from a local village.

The first baron's eldest great-grandson, Peter Greenall, is to become managing director of the company in September. Another great-grandson, John, still works for Greenalls' wine and spirits side. His wife, Gabrielle, is god-mother to Princess Beatrice, the Duke of York's daughter.

Andrew Thomas, the managing director, who will become chairman and chief executive, said it was important Greenalls had maximum flexibility in terms of access to financial markets, and enfranchisement would provide it. Although they were popular once, only a handful of two-tier voting structures still survive on the stock market. One safeguard of the fortunes of the Whitbread family, probably the most influential of the surviving beverage.

Times, page 26



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German mark
2.8860 (+0.0060)
Exchange index
90.8 (+0.1)
Bank of England official
close (4pm)

STOCK MARKETS
FT 30 share
1969.9 (-13.2)
FT-SE 100
2522.0 (-21.4)
New York Dow Jones
3222.05 (-1.34)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave
21534.12 (+675.82)

INTEREST RATES
London: Bank Rate 10½%
3-month Interbank 10½-10¾%
3-month eligible bills 10½-10¾%
US: Prime Rate 6½%
Federal Funds 4½%
3-month Treasury Bills 3.76-3.79%
30-year bonds 10¼-10½%

CURRENCIES
London: £/\$ 1.8105
£/DM 2.8860
£/Sfr 1.4003
£/FF 6.4110
£/Yen 123.20
Indice: DAX 1969.9
DJI 2522.05
Nikkei 21534.12
London foreign market close

GOLD
London Fixing:
AM 338.85 pm 336.75
close 337.25-337.75 (197.40-197.50)
New York:
Comex 337.55-358.15

NORTH SEA OIL
Brent (Feb) ... \$17.90 bbl (\$17.90)

RETAIL PRICES
RPI: 125.7 December (1987-100)
* Denotes midday trading price



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MILTON KEYNES

THE TIMES THURSDAY JANUARY 23 1992

Business
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factory
output

Canada sells

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discovery

Prague

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Businesses show signs of falling confidence

By ANATOLE KALETSKY, ECONOMICS EDITOR

BUSINESS confidence deteriorated in both the manufacturing and service sectors during the final quarter of last year after three quarters of steady improvement, according to the Quarterly Economic Survey from the Association of British Chambers of Commerce.

However, Miles Middleton, the president, said business sentiment remained favourable enough to suggest British industry and commerce were on "an improving trend of slowly and steadily climbing out of recession".

The index of business confidence for manufacturers, based on the balance of expected turnover to rise over the next year, fell to 38 per cent in the fourth quarter from 47 per cent in the third. Among service companies, the index declined to 33 per cent from 42 per cent. Despite the decline, the latest indices in both sectors were higher than between the first quarter of 1990 and the second of 1991.

The association drew fur-

ther encouragement from answers on orders, deliveries and exports. In these categories, the results in the fourth quarter were slightly more favourable than in the September survey, but employment expectations showed a further marked decline, especially in the service sector.

The association's regional analysis showed a wide divergence in economic performance and prospects. In the North-East, the best performing region, the association noted strong growth at home and in exports, rising employment and even growing investment in both manufacturing and service sectors. By contrast, the South-West was still suffering from a high rate of decline and seriously diminishing employment.

Summarising the outlook across the country, the association said: "The North East, the Thames Valley and East Midlands are well on the road to recovery, while Wales, the Southern Region and Merseyside remain in the grip of worsening recession. Recovery, when it comes, will not therefore be uniform or consistent."

Business confidence has fallen, demand remains stagnant and there is no evidence of any upturn in the demand for labour, according to a gloomy survey of Scottish businesses.

The Scottish Chambers of Commerce survey said that in the last quarter of last year, business confidence fell in all principal sectors of the economy, demand continued to contract or remained stagnant, and manufacturers were continuing to run down stocks.

No increase in demand was expected in the first quarter of this year, said the survey, which covered 1,200 firms in Scotland. The only bright spots were Aberdeen, which continued to be the most "buoyant" area for business confidence, and Dundee.

Minimal rise in factory output

By COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

Output in manufacturing industry edged up 0.1 per cent in November, according to the latest government figures. However, the sector's first month-on-month increase since July last year occurred against a background of persistent underlying decline.

The Central Statistical Office cautioned against reading too much into the November data and provided more encouraging news on productivity. In the three months to November, the increase in manufacturers' labour costs slowed to an annual 5 per cent from 6.2 per cent in the three months to October. The slowdown reflected the fact that unemployment was still rising more rapidly than the decline in production. With wages under downward pressure, unit labour costs are decelerating.

Despite the minimal November rise in factory output, the three months' picture is still showing output falling at 1 per cent from the previous three months. Compared with last year, output was down less than 3 per cent. However, this represents an improvement since the 7 per cent annual shrinkage recorded last summer.

Overall industrial production, which includes the energy sector, showed an 0.6 per cent decline between the latest three-month periods, which was attributable to weaker oil and gas production in November. On a year-on-year comparison, the production industries' output was 1.4 per cent down. Keith Skeoch, chief economist at James Capel, said the figures showed the industrial sector was still not picking up, although improved competitiveness suggested well for company profits.

Granada sells

Granada has sold its interest in Kapy, its Spanish retail subsidiary, to Broom Pine Company, an investment company owned by European businessmen. Kapy, which was sold debt free for a nominal consideration, lost £6 million in the last financial year. In the year to end-September, as part of its extraordinary charges, Granada provided £30 million in respect of Kapy, which fully covered costs associated with the disposal.

Frame's post

Sir Alistair Frame, chairman of Wellcome, is to chair the Confederation of British Industry's newly formed national manufacturing council, established to identify the steps needed to protect and improve Britain's manufacturing industry.

Woolwich closures

Woolwich Building Society is closing 21 of its 300 estate agency branches a year after it bought 191 from Prudential Property Services. Most of the closures are in the South.



Merger in mind: Roger Shute, BM chairman, aims to buy Thomas Robinson

BM discloses bid details

By MATTHEW BOND

BM GROUP, the construction equipment distributor, has unveiled a £41 million agreed offer for Thomas Robinson, the mini-conglomerate put together by Graham Rudd but run since last July by Roy Barber, the company director.

BM is offering ten new BM shares for every 148 shares in Thomas Robinson, valuing each Thomas Robinson share at 25.8p and the whole company at around £41 million.

Shares in Thomas Robinson jumped to 24p, twice the level at which they were suspended last Friday. BM's shares closed 18p below their suspension price at 382p.

The bid was accompanied by a £60 million rights issue, which will pay Thomas Rob-

inson's outstanding debts of £40 million and fund an imminent Canadian purchase that takes BM into forestry equipment. After the forestry issue, BM will have gearing of 45 per cent, Roger Shute, BM chairman, said.

BM Group, which has a 2.99 per cent stake in Thomas Robinson, has irrevocable undertakings or indications of an intention to accept the offer from 35.4 per cent of shareholders. Mr Barber recommended that shareholders accept the offer.

He said: "Whilst the new board is continuing its successful programme of disposals and reorganisations intended to improve trading performance, borrowings continue to be at a high level and

the outlook for 1992 remains poor. It is unlikely that shareholders would receive a dividend before 1994."

Mr Shute said the Thomas Robinson business should produce considerable merger benefits when combined with BM's existing businesses. In October, Thomas Robinson revealed pre-tax losses of £22 million.

Chris Radmore, analyst at Bell Lawrie White, said he expected an enlarged BM Group to make pre-tax profits of £65 million, compared to £46.5 million forecast for the year to June. Under the rights issue four new shares will be offered at 330p for every 21 owned.

Tempos, page 26

Lep gives warning of US write-offs

By MARTIN BARROW

LEP GROUP, the troubled security and freight forwarding company, has given warning of substantial provisions and write-offs, principally against its American property interests.

Lep also advised its shareholders that restructuring proposals being discussed with its bankers included a partial conversion of debt into equity.

The company is reviewing the proposed sale of National Guardian, its American security systems business.

The statement was issued in response to a sudden move in Lep's shares from 10p to 17p in recent days. The shares swiftly moved in the opposite direction, closing at only 8p against a 12-month high of 167p.

ADT, the security and car auction group headed by Michael Ashcroft, owns 27 per cent of Lep. John East, finance director of Lep, said the company would write off most or all of its exposure to the American property market, estimated to be in the region of \$150 million.

The refinancing proposals being considered by a syndicate of 30 banks were drawn up after the appointment as chairman of Peter Grant, who is also chairman of Sun Life Assurance. Lep's debts are the product of an ambitious diversification policy pursued in the late Eighties by John Read, the former chairman, who resigned last November.

National Guardian, which is considered to be the most saleable of Lep's assets, was put on the market in mid-1991, when analysts valued it at about £250 million.

However, estimates were downgraded after a buyer failed to materialise and Mr East conceded yesterday that America "is not the best place to be selling businesses these days". He added that Lep's main bankers remained supportive and the company had access to banking facilities.

Lep's financial results for 1991 are scheduled to be published in April.

At the halfway stage, the company revealed that taxable profits had fallen from £10.4 million to £1.9 million. The interim dividend was passed.

BUSINESS ROUND UP

Takeover panel puts Steetley bid on hold

THE City takeover panel has "stopped the clock" on the hostile bid by Redland for Steetley, the building materials group, because the Office of Fair Trading has yet to make a ruling on the bid. The OFT is currently considering whether the bid would reduce competition in certain markets, most crucially clay roof tiles, and the trade secretary has yet to rule on a reference to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

The panel said yesterday that it did not expect a ruling until after day 39 of the bid, which is the last possible date for Steetley to speak out further in its defence. It has therefore decided that day 39 will be deemed to be the second day after an OFT announcement, and the bid clock will restart then. Steetley welcomed the news, which gives it more time to prepare its defence. David Donne, the chairman, said: "If some people perceive that we have been holding our fire, so be it. Now they know why."

T&N buys in Germany

T&N has agreed with Germany's privatisation agency to pay about £2 million for Gleisdorferwerk Osterwick, an automotive bearing maker. The company, which is based in eastern Germany, will be renamed Glacier Vandervell (Osterwick). It will be integrated into T&N's existing bearings division. T&N said the deal was a key step in its plan to increase market presence in Germany. T&N will use Glacier Vandervell's site, about 50 miles south-east of Hanover, as a base to consolidate German operations and as a springboard into Eastern Europe.

Geevor in US talks

GEEVOR, the mining company, is negotiating a £10 million deal involving a reverse takeover, whereby it will acquire gold and coal interests in America. These comprise an underground coal mine, processing plants and various gold and silver mining interests. Details are expected early next month. Meanwhile, the legal action Geevor started last year against Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, relating to bank loans, continues. Geevor shares last traded at 4p and will remain suspended until shareholders approve the acquisition and reorganisation proposals.

McKay rises to £2m

McKAY Securities, the property investment and development company, reported a 5.5 per cent rise in pre-tax profits from £1.91 million to £2.01 million in the six months to end September. Gross rent receipts rose 14.7 per cent to £4.68 million, while income from investment properties advanced 13.9 per cent to £3.97 million. The interim dividend is raised from 3p to 3.2p on earnings up from 5.5p to 6p per share. However, the company said second-half taxable profits "may not be as good as those of the first half", partly because of delayed lettings on recently completed projects.

Coles to sell Sandhurst

COLES Myer, the Australian group, has put Sandhurst Farms Group, its wholly owned agribusiness group, up for sale because it no longer fits in with Coles' core retail operations. Sandhurst, acquired by Coles Myer in 1987, produces dairy and beef products. Sandhurst is one of Australia's biggest beef producers, preparing more than 60,000 head of cattle for markets in Australia and overseas each year. A Coles Myer spokesman said that Coles Myer had decided to put the business up for sale after being approached by a potential buyer.

RCO jumps to £4.39m

SHARES in RCO Holdings, the contract cleaning and related services group, advanced 17p to 385p after the company unveiled a 19.8 per cent rise in full-year profits and predicted further growth in the current period. Growth in both the public and private sectors helped pre-tax profits rise from £3.67 million to £4.39 million in the year to end-September, on turnover ahead 18.2 per cent to £43.2 million. An increased final dividend of 8.4p (7p) per share is recommended, giving a 20 per cent improvement to 12.6p (10.5p) for the year.

Rescue for de Havilland

THE Ontario government confirmed yesterday that it would spend Can\$49 million (£23 million) to rescue de Havilland, the commuter aircraft maker, after the European Commission blocked a proposed takeover by a Franco-Italian consortium in October. The Ontario government and Bombardier, the Canadian group that owns Shorts, the Belfast aviation firm, are expected to buy the loss-making de Havilland from Boeing for Can\$100 million. Bombardier will pay Can\$51 million for a 51 per cent stake, and the government of Ontario will pay Can\$49 million for the rest.

Water firms link up

THAMES Water and Northumbrian Water have joined forces to buy a Dorset company specialising in lining and repairing water and gas pipes. A joint venture company owned 60 per cent by Thames and 40 per cent by Northumbrian will pay an initial £6.25 million for Subterra. Performance-related payments could increase the amount to £10 million. Meanwhile, South West Water is to raise £150 million through its first long-dated bond issue, which will initially yield 1.2 percentage points more than a comparable gilt-edged stock.

Inchcape doubles in Middle East

By OUR CITY STAFF

INCHCAPE, the international services and marketing group, is to double the size of its Middle East operations by buying a group of marketing and distribution companies that trade in eight of the region's states.

Inchcape will pay \$57.5 million to Bricom Group for its interests in the Spinneys group of companies, which will trade alongside Gray Mackenzie, Inchcape's existing Gulf subsidiary. Inchcape Middle East is being established as a regional holding organisation under the chairmanship of David John, a main board director of Inchcape.

Spinneys operates through a series of joint ventures with local partners in Dubai and Abu Dhabi (UAE), Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Jordan, Cyprus and Lebanon. Its main activities are the importing, marketing and distribution of consumer goods,

including international brands. The vendors have warranted 1991 post-tax profits, excluding the Kuwait operations, of \$10.3 million. The net asset value at the end of December was \$16 million.

Charles Mackay, the chief executive of Inchcape, said: "The outlook for political and economic stability in the region is more positive now than it has been for many years and I am confident that the companies within Inchcape Middle East will continue their successful development in the years ahead."

Bob Carpenter, an analyst at Kleinwort Benson Securities, said the deal was "a really interesting move" for Inchcape. He added: "They are buying a company that is very well established in that region and has got some excellent businesses." The shares fell 11p to 427p.

Milken seeks reduced jail term with settlement deal

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON, IN NEW YORK

MICHAEL Milken, once among the most powerful Wall Street financiers and now serving a 10-year jail sentence for securities violations, is offering a once-and-for-all settlement of civil legal actions brought as part of the case, provided he can offset the penalties against tax and make the restitution count towards his bid for a sentence reduction.

According to lawyers close to the negotiations, a deal would also bring exemption from any further legal action against Milken, his brother, Lowell, and Peter Ackerman, their former colleague, for share trading in the Eighties.

In the eight years to 1989, Milken headed the Los Angeles-based junk bond department of Drexel Burnham Lambert, the investment bank, and dominated what grew into a \$300 billion market. It collapsed in 1989,



Milken: early release bid

Milken was tried for fraud the following year and the bank went into the protection of the bankruptcy court. Drexel is now preparing to emerge from bankruptcy and Milken is anxious for his settlement to be tied into the terms of Drexel's comeback.

Drexel is suing Milken for \$1 billion alleging his illegal activities brought about the collapse of the firm. Milken is

also being sued for \$6 billion by two government agencies and other individual investors who allege he sold fraudulent securities to 44 Savings & Loan Associations, the American equivalent of building societies, which failed when the junk bond values plummeted. Taxpayers had to pick up the lost billions.

Milken and his former colleagues are proposing to settle the claims with a payment of what could be \$1 billion. Milken has already paid \$400 million to a restitution fund as part of his punishment after admitting six criminal acts of securities fraud. One of the sticking points is whether the settlement could be made in a form that would allow Mr Milken to deduct at least a proportion of it from his taxes.

Federal regulators, acting on behalf of the taxpayers, are likely to be asked to submit papers supporting Mr Milken's request for an early release.

De Beers is now proud of a relationship with Russia

By COLIN CAMPBELL, MINING CORRESPONDENT

IN THE early Eighties, Gordon Waddell, a former son-in-law of Harry Oppenheimer, the South African mining businessman, was spotted, much to his embarrassment, by a western journalist at the Bolshoi ballet in Moscow sitting in the best seats.

It was a visit to Moscow that took Mr Waddell years to live down, and he spent the rest of the decade insisting that as a British subject living in South Africa, and thus free to travel where he liked, he was "just passing through". The financial world, however, insisted that Mr Waddell was there to talk to the Russians about diamonds and platinum, on behalf of his then father-in-law.

At the time, Russia was a dirty word in South Africa, and vice versa. De Beers' only comment when asked about Russian diamond trading links was "nerv". However, the stone was finally turned yesterday, when the De Beers Centenary founded De Beers diamond empire announced that its De Beers Centenary group, based in Switzerland, will soon be opening a representative office in Moscow. The Moscow office is to be staffed by three expatriates, who have recently

been taking lessons in Russian, and confirms the now close relationship between Russia and De Beers.

But then the Nineties have already proved remarkable for De Beers, which in July 1990 signed a five-year Soviet Union sales contract worth \$5 billion over the length of the contract. At the same time, De Beers said it was making a \$1 billion advance to the Soviet diamond mining industry, against which collateral of best quality Russian diamonds was lodged at De Beers' Central Selling Organisation in London.

The deal was signed with Glavalmazoloto, now Russalmazoloto, the state minerals agency, and has survived the most recent political upheavals in the former Soviet Union.

Russia, together with Botswana, are, in terms of value of carats produced, the world's two most valuable producers of diamonds. For more than 30 years, successive Soviet and Russian diamond authorities have marketed rough gem diamond production directly or indirectly through the CSO, which handles 80 per cent of world gem diamond sales.

Nicholas Oppenheimer, son of Harry and deputy chairman of De Beers Centenary, said yesterday in London: "The opening of this office by De Beers Cent-

nary further cements the relationship between the company and the Russian diamond industry and will help contribute to its long-term stability."

Other political and commercial strides made by De Beers this decade include the agreement signed in December 1990 by De Beers with Endiama, the Angolan state diamond company, which embraced a \$50 million loan to help with development of alluvial diamond production from the Cuango area. Last May, De Beers Centenary renewed a five-year sales contract with Botswana.

Goldbelt Resources, a mining company based in Canada, was also Russia-bound yesterday. It announced in Vancouver that it had advanced US\$500,000 as the first payment of a \$5 million commitment to Comptoir International Du Commerce to help develop minerals resources in Kazakhstan and Russia.

The minerals properties include a gold tailings deposit thought to contain 2.6 million ounces of gold and a copper-silver deposit in eastern Russia believed to be one of the largest in the world. From here on, ballet tickets in Moscow will be hard to come by.

Aid package, page 10



Trading with Russia: Nicholas Oppenheimer seeks long-term stability

STOCK MARKET

New York setback hits share prices

SHARE prices had another volatile day with investors closely watching events on Wall Street. An overnight setback of 30 points for the Dow Jones average prompted an early mark-down among the leading shares in London.

London dealers have become increasingly cautious about New York, fearing a sharp correction in the wake of its recent strong run. There was little evidence of any selling by the small investor and a few buyers at the lower levels enabled the FT-SE 100 index to reduce a 22-point fall to just 4 points by midday.

However, several large lines of stock came on offer in late trading and another hesitant start on Wall Street left the index 21.4 points down at 2,522 by the close. A total of 515 million shares changed hands.

Government securities continued to respond badly to this week's news of a new tap auction with prices at the longer end closing 1/4 lower.

MTB-Carnegie fell 4p to 26p as Cazenove, the broker, placed a line of 2 million shares. BT managed to reduce an early fall to just 1p at 31p as regulatory problems resurfaced.

Downgrades from Nomura knocked BP down 7p at 28p, and Shell, 5p lower

at 493p. The Japanese securities house is concerned about lower oil prices and has cut its 1992 forecast for BP by £317 million to £598 million and for Shell by £252 million to £2.37 billion.

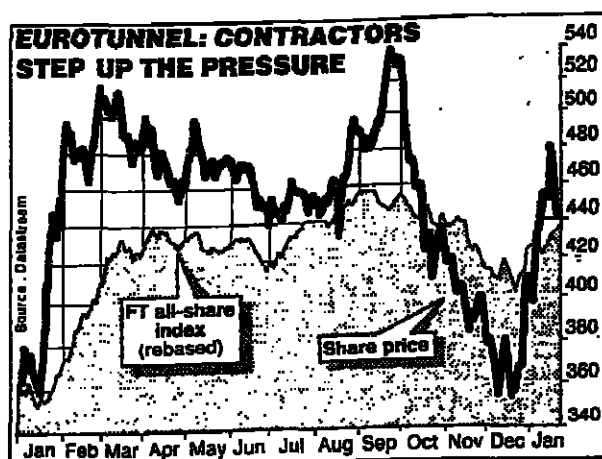
Morgan Crucible eased 1p to 257p as Hoare Govett, the broker, cut its forecast for last year by £4 million to £62 million and for the current year by £8 million to £72 million. Hoare has also cut its estimate for Meyer International, unchanged at 401p, for this year.

Lep, the debt-laden security and transport group, saw its price halve to 8p after the group issued a warning of further substantial write-offs.

Hillsdown Holdings, the food to furniture group, slipped 7p to a low of 153p as another large line of stock went through the market — the second in as many weeks. Hoare Govett, the company's broker, placed 6.5 million shares at about 150p with various institutional clients.

ADT, Michael Ashcroft's security and car auctions group, which continues to hold a near 30 per cent stake in Lep, fell 15p to 423p.

Eurotunnel touched 430p



before recovering to close 12p cheaper at 443p after the High Court gave the contractors working on the Channel tunnel permission to renew their threat to stop work. Transmanche Link was prevented by the court in December from stopping work in order to pursue a £160 million claim for extra payments. The Appeal Court has now overturned the High Court decision. The project should be completed next year.

An attempt by Fisons to heal its rift with the City appears to have been only partly successful with the price ending 6p lower at 352p. Patrick Egan, the new chairman, told analysts that

there was no dispute between the group and the American Food and Drug Administration after the withdrawal last year of two drugs from the American market because of production problems. The FDA published a critical report on Fisons, raising questions about some of its other treatments.

There were setbacks for other drug companies, especially those quoted on Wall Street. Falls were seen in SmithKline Beecham's A shares, 12p to 885p, and Glaxo 25p to 834p.

American investors now account for 765 million Glaxo shares, or 25.44 per cent of the issued capital, registered.

under the Bank of New York Nominees. Wellcome was the only one to make headway, finishing 21p better at £10.76 as BZW reiterated its positive stance on the shares.

Lourie, the international trading group headed by Tiny Rowland, remained a nervous market, falling 11p to 154p before its full-year figures today, expected to show pre-tax profits down from £73 million to £255 million. There is also a question mark over the group's ability to maintain the dividend.

On the bid front, BM, the construction group, fell 18p to 382p after making a recommended offer, worth £41

Vodafone, the cellular telephone network operator, fell 5p to 348p. The group has been meeting analysts, having seen a large line of stock go through the market this week. Hoare Govett spoke to the company on Monday and has cut its forecast for the current year by £15 million to £280 million.

million, for Thomas Robinson, the woodwork and fastenings group.

BM is raising £58 million via a 4-for-21 rights issue to help finance the acquisition.

Rosehaugh slipped 14p to 54p after the breakdown of merger talks with Stanhope. The USM-quoted property group, 1p lighter at 24p. They already have a joint-venture company, which has developed the Broadgate project in the City of London. Rosehaugh is highly geared and two years ago was forced to make a heavily discounted rights issue as part of a rescue package.

MEPC, the property developer, fell 17p to 381p after its annual meeting at which a representative of Harry Hyams called for a poll on a resolution that would enable the company to increase the dividend.

Elsewhere in the property sector, USM-quoted Trevian rose 3p to 43p after receiving an agreed 45p-a-share offer from Frogmore Estates, 2p lower at 320p. The bid values Trevian at £4.95 million. Trevian saw its pre-tax losses fall from £423,000 to £241,000 in the first six months.

Midland & Scottish, the USM-quoted oil exploration group, continued to lose ground, falling 4p to 34p after losing its dispute with Transocean, unchanged at 135p, over the Emerald North Sea oil rig.

MICHAEL CLARK

Blue chips decline in late morning trading

New York — The trend in share prices became mixed in trading in the late morning with the Dow Jones industrial average falling but the broad market remaining firm. The Dow average slipped 6.39 points to 3,217.

□ Hong Kong — Prices finished at a fresh high in active trading despite profit taking in the afternoon after the morning's surge.

The Hang Seng index rose 28.51 points to a record 4,550.72 after touching a high of 4,564.33.

□ Frankfurt — Shares recov-

ered some ground after opening sharply lower, amid fears about falls overseas and domestic economic issues.

Brokers said that nervous investors held back after New York's overnight tumble. The all-ordinaries index closed 15.4 points lower at 1,631.5.

(Reuters)

Nikkei bounces back

Tokyo — Shares reversed a four-day run of declines to close at their day's highs in thin, choppy trading. The Nikkei index climbed 675.82 points, or 3.24 per cent, to 21,534.12. Turnover rose to about 270 million shares, compared with 240 million shares on Tuesday.

Bargain hunting and short covering erased early declines, and hopes of easier credit helped to allay investors' fears about the poor supply and demand situation.

The market opened lower, hit by arbitrage unwinding, linked to a narrow spread with the March futures contract and continued institutional selling.

However, arbitrage buy programs and bargain hunting among blue-chip issues helped to reverse the declines and, buoyed by strength in the futures market and the hopes of easier credit, the Nikkei index staged its biggest single-day jump since January 6.

(Reuters)

Greenalls brews a brighter long-term future

JAMES GRAY

ANDREW Thomas and Peter Greenall are clearly identified as the force behind the newly streamlined and revamped Greenalls Group, so it is only fair that the long-overdue enfranchisement proposals should put them firmly in the driving seat.

What might seem less fair is the market's grudging response to the news. Greenalls' ordinary limited voting shares, after an initial knee-jerk jump of more than 10p, settled down to a rise of just 4p to 401p, despite the unexpected decision of the Greenall family to relinquish control.

In part, this is because the enfranchisement proposals, including a £25 million family placing, will create earnings dilution of about 7 per cent on the limited voters, so the static share price masks an equivalent rise. However, the view also exists that considerably more Greenalls paper is likely to reach the market in due course to fund expansion.

Mr Thomas, chairman and chief executive-elect, insists there are no immediate targets in view, and the market is not looking for an immediate rights issue. Gearing, even after the recent £20 million purchase of the Blayneys off-licence chain, is a comfortable 25 per cent.

However, Greenalls, having sold its Vladimir vodka brand and exited from brewing in 1990 — after concluding that it lacked the

necessary size to make a go of either — now wants to build up the off-licence side and the catering and budget inns, while taking advantage of any decent public houses that come on the market as the big brewers slim down. There are also opportunities in hotels, through the De Vere country house brand.

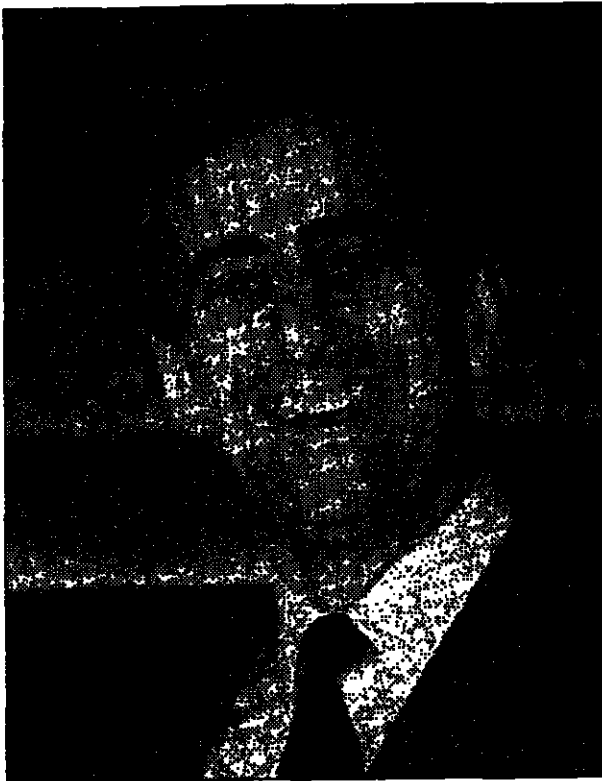
Greenalls has largely avoided the traps that have ensnared some of the other regional brewers over the past few years. John Walters of Smith New Court, the broker, is looking for pre-tax profits of £71 million in the current year, excluding property gains, which puts the shares on a forward multiple of 13.5. This is a demanding rating that promises little in the short term, although on a longer view the shares will not lack support.

BM Group

THE BM Group, as a distributor of heavy construction equipment, should, by rights, be on its knees. Instead, the beginning of 1992 finds it confidently bidding £41 million for Thomas Robinson, the loss-making mini-conglomerate, and launching a £60 million rights issue.

Last October, while others stumbled or fell, BM reported a 48 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £34.1 million and a 31 per cent increase in the total dividend.

The latest flurry of activity,



Dividend held: Geoff Gahan of Newman Tonks

which includes an as-yet unspecified Canadian acquisition, comes just 15 months after BM paid £55 million for Blackwood Lodge, the earthmoving equipment manufacturer.

The remarkable Roger Shute, BM's chairman, is travelling fast. Thomas Robinson's shareholders are

unlikely to be among those questioning whether he is, perhaps, moving too fast.

Thomas Robinson's shareholders received an offer 118 per cent above the suspension price.

However, there must be a little more doubt for BM's shareholders, although Mr Shute should settle many of

those with the March int-

Thomas Robinson is clearly in for the same vigorous pruning, although Roy Barber, the company director, cleared much of the way last October with a £12.6 million redundancy and reorganisation provision.

Nevertheless, Mr Shute believes annual savings of about £7 million are obtainable at a modest one-off cost. Immediately after the 4-for-21 rights issue, which pays off Thomas Robinson's debts and covers the cost of the Canadian expansion, BM's gearing will drop to 45 per cent, and by the June year end a ratio of 35 per cent should be accompanied by pre-tax profits of £46 million.

BM's shares closed at 382p, 5p below the theoretical ex-rights price. With an issue price of 330p, existing shareholders should have few problems in taking up their entitlement. New buyers may feel happier waiting for the interim statement.

Newman Tonks

NEWMAN Tonks Group's investment rating as an income stock is confirmed by the maintained total dividend payment of 9.3p a share for the year to end-October, during which pre-tax profits fell from £23.2 million to £15.1 million and earnings per share from 15.35p to 9.56p.

However, the shares could

now start to attract a following for their capital growth prospects after the acquisition of two companies — one makes high quality timber doors, to which NT products can be attached, and the other company complements the Norwegian operations and could prove the gateway to the rest of Scandinavia.

Shapland & Pether Holdings of Barnstaple is being bought for £13.41 million and Moller & Auster will cost £5.5 million. A placing of 12.99 million shares at 145p each, with clawback provisions, to raise a net £17.89 million was made yesterday. The acquisitions should enhance earnings and so, coupled with rationalisation measures taken last year that include a workforce shakedown by 699 people, NT is set for higher profits this year.

Last year was tough and volume fell, though gross margins were maintained. There is a hint that the refurbishment business is picking up, so perhaps Newman Tonks, where Geoff Gahan is the group chief executive, will be seen to have bought at the bottom of the cycle. There could be further non-core asset disposals this year, and more acquisitions on the Continent.

Pre-tax profits of £20.5 million this year are possible, to put the shares at 155p on 13.8 times earnings, backed by an 8 per cent yield.

Bulmer could lose Perrier contract

By MARTIN BARROW

HP BULMER is resigned to losing the Perrier distribution contract in Britain if Nestlé's £1.3 billion hostile takeover bid for the French mineral water company is successful.

John Rudgard, Bulmer's chief executive, said yesterday that Nestlé would be certain to take over distribution of Perrier in Britain, using its existing supply network.

"We have got a long-term strategy in the event of the bid succeeding. We have sufficient time to plan for any adverse impact it may have," he said.

Bulmer, which was awarded the Perrier contract in 1979, does not disclose how much it earns from mineral water distribution but is known to derive most of its income from sales of Strongbow and Woodpecker cider, which are owned by the company.

Perrier sales plummeted in

1990 after stocks were withdrawn from shelves because of a benzene contamination scare and have never fully recovered despite extensive marketing campaigns.

Bulmer also distributes Buxton and Volvic mineral water, both of which are owned by Perrier.

In the six months to the end of October, Bulmer increased taxable profits from £8.1 million to £9.1 million.

Bulmer's cider has benefited from the restructuring of the brewing industry in response to the monopolies commission report, which released public house tenants from buying their brewery's own cider.

Attempts to acquire other cider brands, including Babydam, which Allied-Lyons wants to sell, have encountered regulatory difficulties because of monopoly considerations.

L&C falls 45% to £1.82m

By PHILIP PANGALOS

LONDON & Clydeside Holdings, the Glasgow housebuilder that operates exclusively in Scotland, unveiled a 45 per cent slump in full-year profits.

The USM-quoted company, which issued a profits warning last August, saw pre-tax profits fall to £1.82 million (£3.31 million) in the year to end-September, on turnover of £21.4 million (£20.8 million). Norman Chalmers, chairman, blamed the fall on difficult conditions in the Scottish housing market.

Operating profits slipped from £4.01 million to £3.36 million, but interest payments were £1.54 million (£706,000), affected by site acquisitions and the retention of an investment property. Earnings slide to 14.9p (24.5p) per share, but the final dividend is maintained at 5.2p, making an unchanged total of 7p.

First Maryland profit leaps 72%

By NEIL BENNETT
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE American subsidiary of AIB Group, Ireland's leading bank, continues to defy the recession in the financial services industry by reporting record profits, while its competitors plunge into losses.

First Maryland Bancorp increased net profits 72 per cent to \$75.1 million last year. In the final quarter of the year, it reported earnings of \$23.9 million, compared with \$1.5 million in 1990.

The rise was achieved via a fall in bad debt provisions and tight cost control. Jerry Casey, First Maryland chairman, said he was pleased considering the economic problems the East Coast of America is suffering. "We worked as a team to maintain the bank's well-being," he said.

First Maryland has avoided most of the bad property loans affecting its rivals. As a result, its bad debt reserves



Casey: teamwork

are only \$204 million. The figures are in contrast to the \$372 million loss for 1991 at NatWest Bancorp, National Westminster's American subsidiary and the \$457 million loss at Citicorp, America's biggest bank. AIB bought First Maryland in 1983 and it has been one of the best acquisitions ever made by a European bank in America.

Mountleigh results delayed

By MATTHEW BOND

MOUNTLEIGH, the debt-laden property group, will publish its interim results within a week, a company spokesman said yesterday.

Sir Ian MacGregor, chairman, is currently recovering from heart surgery in America, and his absence has caused problems in the drafting of a chairman's statement.

The Mountleigh board will also be hoping that the delay will enable the interim figures to be accompanied by confirmation that the Merry Hill shopping centre in the West Midlands has been sold. Rumours that Merry Hill has been sold have been circulating for several weeks, although the reported price of around £120 million is well below the £150 million that Mountleigh hoped to achieve when it placed the property on the market last year.

Jan 22	Jan 21	Jan 20	Jan 19	Jan 18	Jan 17	Jan 16	Jan 15	Jan 14	Jan 13	Jan 12	Jan 11	Jan 10	Jan 9	Jan 8	Jan 7	Jan 6	Jan 5	Jan 4	Jan 3	Jan 2	Jan 1	Dec 31	Dec 30	Dec 29	Dec 28	Dec 27	Dec 26	Dec 25	Dec 24	Dec 23	Dec 22	Dec 21	Dec 20	Dec 19	Dec 18	Dec 17	Dec 16	Dec 15	Dec 14	Dec 13	Dec 12	Dec 11	Dec 10	Dec 9	Dec 8	Dec 7	Dec 6	Dec 5	Dec 4	Dec 3	Dec 2	Dec 1	Nov 30	Nov 29	Nov 28	Nov 27	Nov 26	Nov 25	Nov 24	Nov 23	Nov 22	Nov 21	Nov 20	Nov 19	Nov 18	Nov 17	Nov 16	Nov 15	Nov 14	Nov 13	Nov 12	Nov 11	Nov 10	Nov 9	Nov 8	Nov 7	Nov 6	Nov 5	Nov 4	Nov 3	Nov 2	Nov 1	Oct 31	Oct 30	Oct 29	Oct 28	Oct 27	Oct 26	Oct 25	Oct 24	Oct 23	Oct 22	Oct 21	Oct 20	Oct 19	Oct 18	Oct 17	Oct 16	Oct 15	Oct 14	Oct 13	Oct 12	Oct 11	Oct 10	Oct 9	Oct 8	Oct 7	Oct 6	Oct 5	Oct 4	Oct 3	Oct 2	Oct 1	Sep 30	Sep 29	Sep 28	Sep 27	Sep 26	Sep 25	Sep 24	Sep 23	Sep 22	Sep 21	Sep 20	Sep 19	Sep 18	Sep 17	Sep 16	Sep 15	Sep 14	Sep 13	Sep 12	Sep 11	Sep 10	Sep 9	Sep 8	Sep 7	Sep 6	Sep 5	Sep 4	Sep 3	Sep 2	Sep 1	Aug 31	Aug 30	Aug 29	Aug 28	Aug 27	Aug 26	Aug 25	Aug 24	Aug 23	Aug 22	Aug 21	Aug 20	Aug 19	Aug 18	Aug 17	Aug 16	Aug 15	Aug 14	Aug 13	Aug 12	Aug 11	Aug 10	Aug 9	Aug 8	Aug 7	Aug 6	Aug 5	Aug 4	Aug 3	Aug 2	Aug 1	Jul 31	Jul 30	Jul 29	Jul 28	Jul 27	Jul 26	Jul 25	Jul 24	Jul 23	Jul 22	Jul 21	Jul 20	Jul 19	Jul 18	Jul 17	Jul 16	Jul 15	Jul 14	Jul 13	Jul 12	Jul 11	Jul 10	Jul 9	Jul 8	Jul 7	Jul 6	Jul 5	Jul 4	Jul 3	Jul 2	Jul 1	Jun 30	Jun 29	Jun 28	Jun 27	Jun 26	Jun 25	Jun 24	Jun 23	Jun 22	Jun 21	Jun 20	Jun 19	Jun 18	Jun 17	Jun 16	Jun 15	Jun 14	Jun 13	Jun 12	Jun 11	Jun 10	Jun 9	Jun 8	Jun 7	Jun 6	Jun 5	Jun 4	Jun 3	Jun 2	Jun 1	May 31	May 30	May 29	May 28	May 27	May 26	May 25	May 24	May 23	May 22	May 21	May 20	May 19	May 18	May 17	May 16	May 15	May 14	May 13	May 12	May 11	May 10	May 9	May 8	May 7	May 6	May 5	May 4	May 3	May 2	May 1	Apr 30	Apr 29	Apr 28	Apr 27	Apr 26	Apr 25	Apr 24	Apr 23	Apr 22	Apr 21	Apr 20	Apr 19	Apr 18	Apr 17	Apr 16	Apr 15	Apr 14	Apr 13	Apr 12	Apr 11	Apr 10	Apr 9	Apr 8	Apr 7	Apr 6	Apr 5	Apr 4	Apr 3	Apr 2	Apr 1	Mar 31	Mar 30	Mar 29	Mar 28	Mar 27	Mar 26	Mar 25	Mar 24	Mar 23	Mar 22	Mar 21	Mar 20	Mar 19	Mar 18	Mar 17	Mar 16	Mar 15	Mar 14	Mar 13	Mar 12	Mar 11	Mar 10	Mar 9	Mar 8	Mar 7	Mar 6	Mar 5	Mar 4	Mar 3	Mar 2	Mar 1	Feb 29	Feb 28	Feb 27	Feb 26	Feb 25	Feb 24	Feb 23	Feb 22	Feb 21	Feb 20	Feb 19	Feb 18	Feb 17	Feb 16	Feb 15	Feb 14	Feb 13	Feb 12	Feb 11	Feb 10	Feb 9	Feb 8	Feb 7	Feb 6	Feb 5	Feb 4	Feb 3	Feb 2	Feb 1	Jan 31	Jan 30	Jan 29	Jan 28	Jan 27	Jan 26	Jan 25	Jan 24	Jan 23	Jan 22	Jan 21	Jan 20	Jan 19	Jan 18	Jan 17	Jan 16	Jan 15	Jan 14	Jan 13	Jan 12	Jan 11	Jan 10	Jan 9	Jan 8	Jan 7	Jan 6	Jan 5	Jan 4	Jan 3	Jan 2	Jan 1
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Rosehaugh runs out of options

Godfrey Bradman, a star of the property world for much of the Eighties, has joined the ranks of far less clever men who failed to see the end of the boom and the depths of the slump that was to follow. The final collapse of the long-running merger talks with Stanhope, its partner in a number of prestigious developments, leaves Mr Bradman in the hands of his bankers.

For Rosehaugh, an off-the-shelf tea company bought by Mr Bradman in 1979, the writing has been on the wall for some time.

The merger with Stanhope looked at first like a natural development of the partnership which gave rise to the Broadgate development, at London's Liverpool Street station, Ludgate Place, by St Pauls and King's Cross, the most ambitious of the lot. It soon became fraught though, with Bradman and Stuart Lipton, the conservative founder of Stanhope, failing to agree as the talks wore on.

A deal failed to emerge before Rosehaugh reported massive losses of £227 million last December. That followed a loss of £165 million the previous year and Mr Bradman stepped down to take the role of vice-chairman.

While Mr Lipton concentrated his efforts on a few large developments backed by Olympia & York, his 33 per cent stakeholder, Rosehaugh spread itself thinly in a welter of diversified operations. Many of these have now been tied up. But in Stanhope's view, following the refinancing of some of the joint ventures with Rosehaugh, the attractions of the remaining diversified activities have become severely limited.

The banks have a keen interest in supporting Rosehaugh which owes them around £300 million. But for shareholders, the worst property slump since the war has put paid to hopes of a decent return on their investment in Rosehaugh.

Fisons rebuilds

Fisons' meeting with pharmaceutical analysts yesterday was replete with ironies. Much of the City displeasure that led to the departure of John Kerridge, whose long record of success finally turned sour last year, was linked to perceived poor communications. But yesterday's get-together, claimed by analysts to be the first for five years, was arranged before Mr Kerridge's departure even though he was not personally expected to make the presentation.

Patrick Egan, having just stepped in as executive chairman, none the less took his chance to show that he was firmly in charge of Ipswich's proudest ship and to announce the meeting publicly.

The planned upbeat presentation of two potentially significant post-1995 drugs, one in Fisons' asthma/allergy mainstream and the other for epilepsy and stroke control, inevitably paled before immediate concerns over Fisons' problems with America's Food and Drug Administration. Officials from the FDA are due to inspect British production facilities for exports of Opticrom and Imferon, whose absence from America is largely responsible for the anticipated fall in Fisons' profits from £230 million to about £190 million.

All this reassurance pushed Fisons shares up 2p, but that did not last long and they ended the day 6p down at 352p. Still, Mr Egan has made a start at mending fences. The message to other successful companies is quite clear: do not rely on good results to speak for themselves. Even the best managements have lapses and that is when they need friends in the City. Otherwise, shareholders bear the price of arrogant management in the exaggerated stock market impact of bad news.

How the TSB learned to see errors of its ways

Rodney Hobson reports on one bank's reaction when it found that a quarter of its staff time was spent on correcting mistakes

Sir Peter Walters, chairman of Midland Bank, surprised fellow members of the Institute of Directors last month by admitting that customers had been right to criticise banks for poor service or "unacceptable customer care". This did not, however, come as a surprise to Sir Nicholas Goodison, chairman of TSB Bank, who identified an alarming problem at the TSB Bank and decided to do something about it two years ago. While three of the bank's employees were getting on with their jobs, a fourth was clearing up the mess. To change that, the retail banking and insurance arm of the TSB Group is sending its 28,000 staff for training to improve quality of service for its 7 million customers.

Not that TSB is any worse than the rest of the financial services sector or, indeed, British industry in general. Jim Roy, the man brought to TSB's London headquarters from Edinburgh to mastermind its quality programme, says: "We estimate that 25 per cent of staff time is wasted on rechecking other people's work and correcting mistakes. I know of one financial services company that spends 70 per cent of its total costs on fire-fighting."

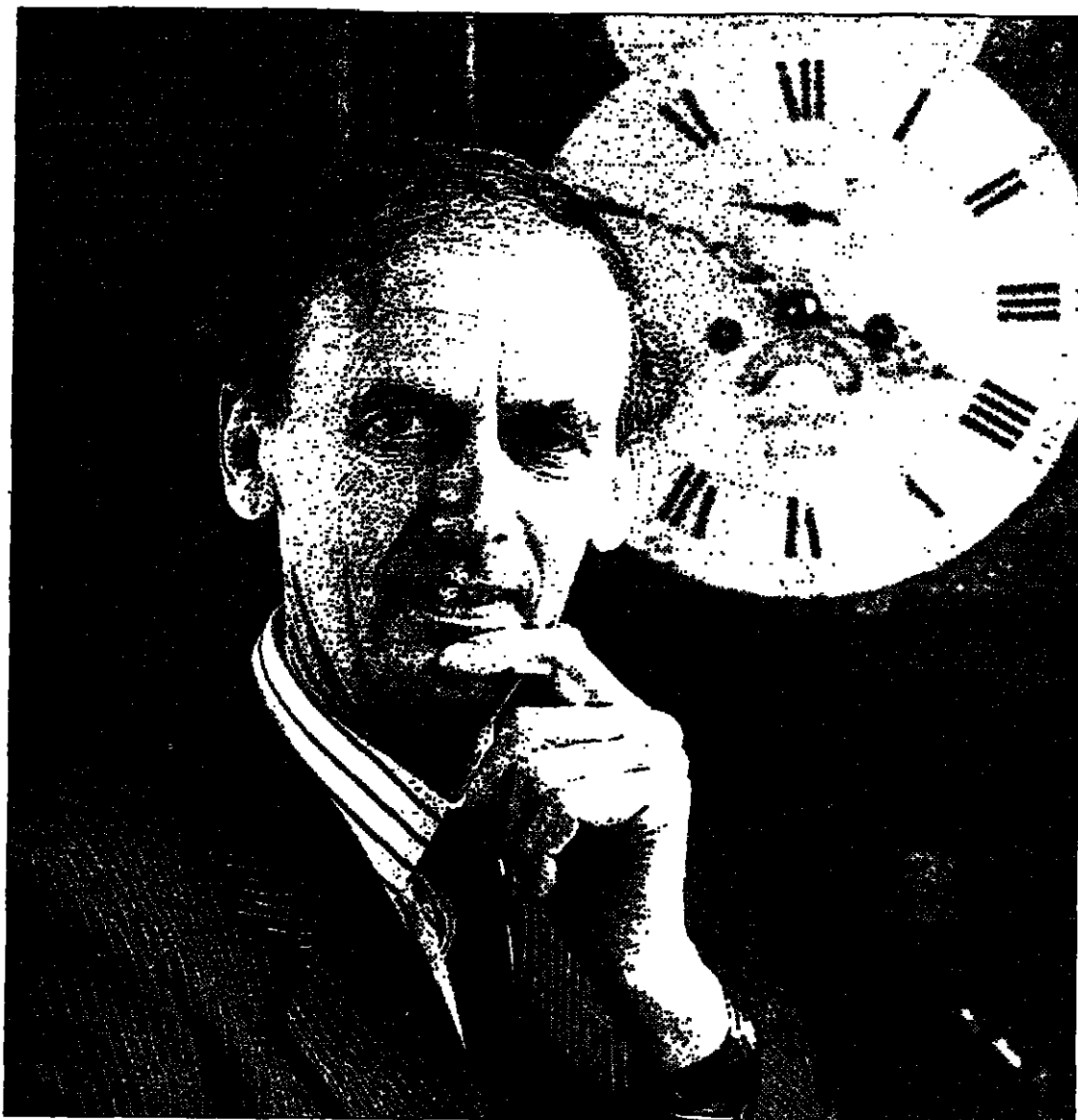
"Industry is the same. German car manufacturers make cars that are just as bad as any made in Britain and the inspectors sort the problems out so that in the end the cars are perfect. The Japanese manufacture cars without faults in the first place. They don't believe in inspection and correction."

It is much more efficient and more profitable to find where the faults are occurring than to put them right later. Peter Ellwood, chief executive of retail banking at TSB, took the initiative to set up the scheme and went on the first course himself. TSB is spending £20 million on the initiative, described by Mr Roy as "organised common sense". The team of trainers will move to Birmingham when the TSB Bank head office moves there next month.

The bank believes that with all banks and building societies offering a wide range of products, competition has to be based on who offers the best service.

Mr Roy admits: "Compared with retailers of consumer goods, such as Sainsbury's or Marks and Spencer, banks have been slow to change, to recognise that consumers have become much more sophisticated. That applies to banks across the world, not just in Britain."

Training began in June last year and will be completed by early 1993. The TSB training centre has had to cope with 1,000 senior managers on a series of four-day courses. The next level of management has



Time is money: Sir Nicholas Goodison found TSB bank staff were making too many mistakes

attended weekly seminars on a geographic basis over a ten-week period interspersed with work assignments. While, at branch level, staff went through six weekly sessions.

It may be too early to judge the effects of the scheme, but Sir Nicholas reported an unexpectedly strong 17 per cent rise in the retail bank's profits to £413 million for the year to end-October when he announced last week that the group as a whole had plunged into losses. Much of that improvement is put down to reorganisation over the past two years, however, and not just to the quality initiative.

Mr Roy says: "We wanted to get away from the traditional suggestion box. You might find the occasional idea in the tin but they were barely worth pursuing. In any case, it is often too much to ask of people to come up with ideas when they are trying to get on with their jobs."

"We are building a mechanism that will enable every employee to say there is an obstacle here preventing me from doing my job. We will find the problem, put in a temporary solution and remove the root cause."

TSB Bank will measure its success by monitoring the reduction of dissatisfaction among customers and measuring discontent as compared with the level of complaints against

competitors. First, a group of the bank's customers was brought together for a general moan session; then a wider cross section came in for individual interviews on specific grievances and needs. Finally, questionnaires, to be repeated annually, asked what priorities customers thought the bank should have and how they rated TSB's performance. TSB has conducted similar surveys of other banks' customers.

Mr Roy says: "Staff themselves will measure their own progress. The programme will generate its own momentum by removing the hassle from their work. They will want to be part of the scheme, to become ever more involved in the whirl of things."

The TSB Group claims that no other financial company in Europe has given anything approaching the commitment to "total quality management": it says action is needed because research shows that a significant number of customers who leave banks and building societies do so because they are dissatisfied with the service they receive. Others simply put up with the service because they do not feel they will do any better elsewhere. Pilot studies have already identi-

fied areas where service could be readily improved. These include speeding up credit card applications, reducing direct debit errors and avoiding the shock of unexpected charges appearing on bank statements.

Mr Roy says: "We want to make sure that our charges are just as plain to the customer as when he goes into a shop to buy a video recorder. You know that the retailer is not selling at cost. He has got to make a profit to survive. Banks also make charges to make a profit."

Even tiny nuisances can waste a disproportionate amount of time. TSB displayed in all branches a foreign exchange board showing the bank's buying rate in column one and the selling rate in column two. Every day a computer printout in each branch gave the selling rate in column one and the buying rate in column two.

Transposing the two columns every day in the branches gave rise to errors, to the annoyance of customers.

Mr Paul thinks customers ought to complain more if they do not get the service they want. He says: "I would encourage them to complain. If we do not know what is making them unhappy how are we going to change things?"

Germany finds a friend in Denmark

The Bundesbank's much criticised decision to tighten the monetary reins just before Christmas has a strong ally in Denmark. According to Erik Hoffmeyer, the Danish chairman of the European Community's committee of central bank governors, the decision was the Germans' only option.

Mr Hoffmeyer, governor of the Danish central bank for 27 years, told *The Times* that he not only thinks Helmut Schlesinger, the Bundesbank president, has been doing the right thing, but also that there is a consensus among central bankers about the German policy.

Given the high rates of growth Germany has experienced, wage demands in double digits, and inflation above 4 per cent, he said "the Bundesbank had no other choice".

Mr Hoffmeyer said some countries argue that they do not have an inflation problem. "The consequence of that argument is that they don't care about inflation," he said. He saw the difficulty for Germany, in the context of progress towards European monetary union, was the fact that its stability-consciousness was still higher than in most other countries.

For other countries to convince the Bundesbank of their anti-inflationary credentials clearly remained a problem, Mr Hoffmeyer said. "How long do you have to have been behaving well to prove that it is really your objective?"

Although Denmark has already achieved the economic conditions to allow it to move to monetary union, Mr Hoffmeyer is clearly sceptical about whether countries now displaying virtuous policies and results will necessarily sustain the performance; hence his support for Dr Schlesinger's stance.

The debate in Copenhagen about economic integration was long dominated by fears that tiny Denmark would be swamped by neighbouring Germany. Europe's economic power house. In fact, Mr Hoffmeyer said, such anxieties proved unrealistic. "We have only gained," he said categorically. The Danish government has nevertheless decided to call two referendums on EMU. Though the Danish central bank will have to be given legal independence in the run up to EMU, it is effectively independent of government already. Despite Danish inflation running at an annual rate of about 2 per cent, less than half that of Germany, Mr Hoffmeyer does not appear disturbed by the fact that Danish interest rates remain a touch higher than in Germany. He considers it too much to expect "instant" closing of the rate gap as soon as a country undercuts German inflation.

He wants Denmark to be in the first wave of countries irrevocably fixing exchange rates. "We would be willing and interested in moving ahead fast," he said. "And if you want to move fast it is inevitable that there will be two groups."

COLIN NARBROUGH
Economics Correspondent

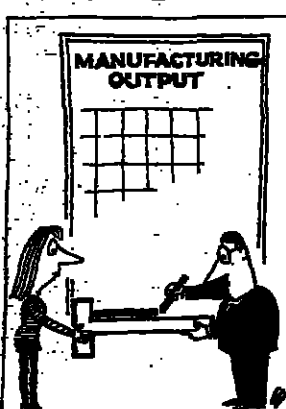
THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Don't ring US...

HARD pressed staff at JP Morgan, the American investment bank planning to make markets in UK equities by the middle of this year — it gained membership of the Stock Exchange last week — have been inundated with CVs from redundant brokers. Hoping to cool their enthusiasm, John Horne, head of corporate communications, says that of the 20 or so jobs in London this is likely to create — increasing its staff from 45 to 65 — 15 will be filled internally. "There are a lot of good candidates around at the moment, so it is hard to close the cheque book entirely," he said, adding that the stocks in which it will initially make markets "will be closer to a dozen than any larger number". One external vacancy has been filled. John Monney resigned on Tuesday as deputy head of trading at Hoare Govett to become a UK market-maker at JP Morgan. Monney, aged 28, admits to feeling "a bit sad" at leaving Hoare Govett after more than seven years.

Putnam's tiger

JONATHAN CUSTANCE Baker, one of the City's old guard, is back in his old haunts after a six-month absence. He has returned to help Putnam, one of America's most powerful fund management houses, build up its list of clients in Britain and on the Continent — a drive which may lead to joint ventures or acquisitions in France and Germany. "There is no lack of resources either in money, people or expertise, nor is there a lack of commitment," says Custance.



Baker, aged 42, who stepped down as head of James Capel's unit trust operations last June. An army officer-turned shipbroker, he joined GT in 1981, and spent three years in San Francisco setting up a range of funds for the investment group. But he is best remembered for an episode in November 1989 when he posed with a tiger to publicise the launch of a Far Eastern unit trust. "The trainer stood just out of frame waving pieces of meat at it," says Custance Baker. He starts as managing director of European Business Development for Putnam on February 1, and leaves soon after for a six-week spell in his Boston, Massachusetts, headquarters.

BZW stocks up

BILL Smith, head of research at BZW, has been out and about with his corporate cheque-book. He has signed up Howard Seymour from UBS Phillips & Drew, a building materials analyst ranked fifth in the Eurol league table, to fill a vacancy created last summer when Mark Stockdale left for SG Warburg. And he has also

named Andrew Benson from Robert Fleming to boost BZW's chemicals team, a critical move since the firm lists ICI as a client. Benson will assist Oliver Fear, who moves up a notch internally to become BZW's lead chemicals analyst. Fear, who is a chartered accountant, similarly assisted Jinty Price for five years when she led the BZW chemicals team, until her departure in December last year, before the birth of her second child — which is due in the spring.

MOST inappropriate metaphor of the week? A report on *Thames TV* claims that, compared with the huge debts accumulated by the late Robert Maxwell, the proceeds from the auction of fixtures and fittings at his luxury London penthouse would be "a drop in the ocean."

Cash and carry out

AGGRESSIVE? Tense? No appetite? If so, it is time to slow down before stress gets the better of you. Realising that stress is likely to affect just about everyone who works in the Square Mile, a Worcestershire businessman has launched a package to help sufferers monitor themselves before it is too late. Andrew Nicholls, who set up Britain's first Cash and Carry for builders and now runs a rest centre for stressed-out vicars near Redditch, hopes to show brokers, bankers and analysts how to cope with their frenetic lifestyles. "The package is to make people more aware of stress," says a spokesman for Stress Check. "Cold, sweaty handshakes are the ones to watch out for."

CAROL LEONARD

BUSINESS LETTERS

Challenging compensation

From Dr Maurice Gillibrand.

Sir, Irrespective of the merits or otherwise of the particular justification for the payment of over half a million pounds to the former Chief Executive of Granada (January 15), it is not that such a distribution of shareholders funds should be challenged by shareholders.

Section 312 of the Companies Act 1985 states that it is unlawful to make any payment by way of compensation without the proposed payment "being disclosed to members of the company and the proposal being approved by the company".

Almost invariably, it is euphemistically stated that the director has "resigned" when, in fact, his contract has been terminated by the board. In the majority of cases the board consists of the same people who made the appointment in the first place. Nevertheless, the concept is promoted that the compensation is justified in order to avoid expensive litigation.

However, if in fact the di-

rector had resigned of his own volition, it is extremely doubtful that a court would award an amount equivalent to the unexpired part of his contract. It is equally unlikely that a similar amount would be awarded if the board had terminated the contract for good reasons, such as failure to properly discharge the change in business strategy, in which compensation would be justified. The real issue is that at present the maximum compensation is paid whatever the circumstances, which is hardly an incentive for good performance.

The unfortunate aspect of this situation is that although Section 312 of the Companies Act appears to have been designed to protect shareholders' funds, the automatic acquiescence of shareholders has nullified these provisions. Yours faithfully, MAURICE GILLIBRAND, 7 Tay & Cae, Tregarn, Bangor, Gwynedd.

These snippets? Does the fact that one went to school near Slough (come friendly bombs?) — J Bejeman imply that losing control and making huge losses for shareholders, makes it all OK?

Yours faithfully, REGINALD NEWISS, 24A Brook Street, Ilkley, West Yorkshire.

Old Etonian smiling through adversity

From Mr R. Newiss

Sir, In your report on the Lloyd's results you refer to the chairman as "an old Etonian". Today we have a photograph of the chairman of the TSB who, I believe, also attended that institution, and Don McCrickard, chief executive, both smiling and apparently full of joy about achieving a write-off of £654m and a pre-tax loss of £47m.

The extent of the losses at Lloyd's beggars description! What message are your readers supposed to get from

these snippets? Does the fact that one went to school near Slough (come friendly bombs?) — J Bejeman imply that losing control and making huge losses for shareholders, makes it all OK?

Yours faithfully, REGINALD NEWISS, 24A Brook Street, Ilkley, West Yorkshire.

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THE TIMES THURSDAY JANUARY 23 1992

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0.0002	0.0002
0.0005	0.0001
0.001	0.0001

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A fit place for keeping in shape

Fitness enthusiasts increasingly prefer to exercise at home. Nicole Swengley looks at the latest equipment on offer

Exercising at home is fast becoming the fashionable way to keep fit. According to the Henley Centre for Forecasting, the trend towards individual workouts is likely to continue and Mintel, a research company, reports that the home-use fitness equipment market has grown by almost 50 per cent during the past five years.

Greater use of multi-gyms (all-in-one units for a range of exercises) and weight-training equipment such as benches and free weights account for most of the increase, although sales of exercise bikes and rowing machines still represent nearly 60 per cent of overall sales.

Sophie Bolton, the marketing manager for Bolton Stridair, distributors of Tunturi equipment, and a leader in the bicycle and rowing machine market, says: "People are fed up with driving to a gym where parking is not always easy. Obviously, our home-use equipment is not as sophisticated as that in gyms, but it is smaller, lighter and can be easily moved and stored."

"A lot of health clubs have Tunturi equipment, however, so people become familiar with it and want to use it at home."

New Tunturi machines such as

the E603 air-resistance cycle, costing £350, C401 Stepper, £230; and MT311 multi-gym, £575, are competing well with favourites such as the E211 Family and Super exercise bike, £145.95, and R501 rowing machine, £326, with electronic console.

Harrods, which stocks Tunturi (and is offering 10 per cent off all fitness equipment until Saturday) confirms that Tunturi's C401 stepper and E405 exercise bike are bestsellers. Electronic joggers, such as Tunturi's J502, are gaining popularity, despite an £1,850 price tag. The Tunturi Ski Fit, £474, and Schwinn XR10 cross-country ski machine for £450 are also selling well.

It is a similar story at the 200 Olympus Sports nationwide outlets, where the machines include the Tunturi E404 Ergometer exercise bike, £285, the Family Super and the E401 Stepper, Kettler's Manta bike, £129, and Kettler's Variant multi-exerciser, £150.

The growth in the home fitness equipment market is complementary, rather than detrimental, to health club membership, according to David Giampaolo, the managing director of London's Espree club, which is opening a second London site this year and another in 1993.



Carol Hampton, who runs a home-fitness firm: "Our typical client is female, fat and 40 — although we also have male clients"

He says: "Home equipment encourages people to exercise regularly. Clubs see a spin-off from that."

He urges enthusiasts to seek professional advice. "Buying unsuitable equipment can be a costly mistake. It is better to pay for a single guest visit to Espree to try our equipment and talk to experts about what to buy. This is especially important for anybody who has been unwell or suffered an injury."

Tony Lycholat, a sports scientist, agrees that it is essential to buy quality equipment. "Look on it as a long-term investment," he says. "Cheap machines tend not to be adjustable for size and will fall apart. Make sure you have the space to leave equipment set up. Unless it is ready to use, you will not bother."

With the trend away from traditional rowers and exercise bicycles, manufacturers are devising

new systems for home use. Malibu Sports International retains two inventors to develop patented concepts such as the Dyn-a-Step £59.95, an adjustable free-stepper. The Pull Gym £159 offers all the classic barbell exercises for a weights-free workout and the Trike-Ro £69.95 facilitates rowing in an elevated position.

At £15.95, Malibu's Swivel Hip is an inexpensive way to twist towards fitness.

Some enlightened companies motivate employees by offering fitness equipment as an incentive for top achievers. Providing sedentary executives with cardio-vascular fitness equipment such as rowing and cycling machines, treadmills and steppers, can only be in a company's interests in the long run. Kettler, a leading supplier of exercise equipment to sales promotions companies, offers a full product range including trampo-

lines, multi-gyms, aerobics equipment and ten other exercise devices.

Among the companies offering staff incentives of Kettler equipment are Abbey Life, Esso, Boots, Lloyds Bank, British Telecom, Fisons, Mars, Rumbelows and Radio Rentals.

For those lacking the motivation to use home fitness equipment, a personal exercise trainer is increasingly seen as the answer.

Carol Hampton, the director of Energy Unlimited, whose licensed personal trainers visit clients' homes throughout Britain, says: "Our typical client is female, fat and 40, although we also have male clients and trainers."

"They are mainly successful business or professional people who do not have the time or inclination to go to a health club. They are generally confident people but unhappy about the appearance of their bodies or feeling lethargic."

"After a free consultation, we devise a programme of exercise, whether for weight loss, general toning or a specific sport, such as skiing. Each one-hour session costs £35."

"We use light weights for floor work, dumbbells for body toning, resistance bands for upper body training, skipping ropes and a trampoline. We take the small equipment with us but we like it when clients have their own equipment. We can also advise on what to buy and, most importantly, what they are likely to use."

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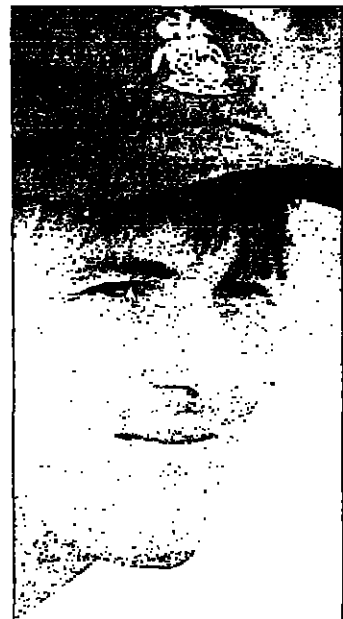
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Tufnell is no longer a rebel without applause



Tufnell: changed character

BY ALAN LEE
AND RICHARD STREETON

ENGLAND'S third consecutive Test match victory was completed amid high tension and against improbable odds in Christchurch yesterday. As in the previous two, the match-winner was Philip Tufnell, whose remarkable final spell brought him six wickets for 14 as New Zealand were dismissed for runs and ten minutes short of safety.

It was England's first win in New Zealand since 1978 and they now stand to become the only side to win a Test series in the country in 12 years. Indeed, a series that seemed destined for a slow, unwatchable death — if this opening match had been drawn — was rescued by the maverick from Middlesex whose style and quality of spin bowling have been the most gratifying additions to Test cricket for some years.

Tufnell, aged 25, has taken 32 wickets in his first seven Tests but the figures from his last three are

astounding — 23 wickets at an average of 14.74. He began the sequence at The Oval in August, when his six for 25 destroyed the West Indies, and followed up with five wickets against Sri Lanka.

His match figures of 11 for 147 are the best for England against New Zealand since Derek Underwood, a left-arm spin bowler of bygone years, took 12 for 97 on the same ground in 1971.

Face to face, Tufnell does not come across as the sporting superman and, no doubt, never will. His hair has been cut but remains unkempt, the stubble is as permanent as the cigarette in his hand, and he speaks with an exaggerated Cockney accent that manages to make the blindingly obvious sound quite surprising.

His conversion from teenage tearaway to world-class spin bowler owes much to Gordon Jenkins, manager of the MCC indoor school at Lord's, who has been the player's friend and mentor since he was ten.

A promising games player,

Tufnell was in danger of becoming a drop-out at 14 after being expelled from two schools and turning his back on sport.

Jenkins first coached him when he was a fast bowler at under-11 classes at Finchley. It was not too long before the boy's slender build led him to advise a switch to left-arm spin. From the start, Tufnell revelled in his ability to mesmerise opponents with considerable turn.

In other areas, though, life was more complicated and he became something of a rebel. He first parted company with Highgate school, and then with Southgate comprehensive, and he went on to abandon cricket for more than two years. Speaking of this period, years later, he said: "Why go to nets for two hours when all your mates are down the local house making career-best scores on the Galactic Defender?"

None of this prevented Tufnell from obtaining an O-level in art and a City and Guilds qualification in silversmithing, his father's

profession. Jenkins was a friend of Tufnell's father and had kept an eye on the lad. "No coach likes to see a gifted talent being lost," he said. Between them, parent and coach persuaded the boy to go to Lord's on a coaching course.

After watching the 15-year-old bowl only a few balls, John Hampshire, the former England and Yorkshire batsman, predicted a significant future for him in county cricket. Tufnell won an MCC/Lord's Taverners competition as the most promising pupil and he joined the Lord's groundsman.

He was fortunate that the head coach, Don Wilson — formerly of Yorkshire and England — was a left-arm spinner who appreciated he had something special on which to work.

Don Bennett, the Middlesex coach, was another to help a pupil whose ability and skill outweighed lingering concern at dress and behavioural patterns that remained almost "hippyish" by Lord's standards.

Jenkins explained: "You must remember that Tufnell is that rarity — a really aggressive spin bowler. He is as aggressive as Lillee used to be when bowling fast. He is not a Derek Underwood character."

"His aggression is an attribute and it often hides uncertainty. He actually needs to be encouraged, almost more than any cricketer I have known."

"Properly controlled, though, this aggression will help him to become a great bowler, whom I would not expect to reach his peak for another four years."

John Embury, the Middlesex and England off-spinner, agreed. "He is gradually learning to become a thinking bowler and not to get discouraged," he said. "He has a marvellous future for the next 15 years as England's main spinner."

Through the late 1980s, Tufnell developed his craft for Middlesex, first at second XI level before finally establishing himself in the first team in 1990. It was a rapid

rise — too rapid, he confessed to Jenkins when recounting his relationship problems with Graham Gooch and Micki Stewart in Australia last winter.

These days, Tufnell acknowledges the help given in the Middlesex dressing room by Mike Gatting and Embury, who have instilled a greater sense of obvious dedication and discipline — the lack of which, for a time, threatened his retention as a contracted player.

Tufnell has matured beyond recognition, something confirmed by the way he has survived the crowd baiting and "throwing" allegations on the present tour to New Zealand.

Last night he emerged from the England celebrations and, in his own way, played down his efforts. "Seven for 47? Is that what it was? I suppose it was a good spell, then," he said. "I don't think I bowled any better than usual and certainly not in a different way. I just ran up and bowl, keep plugging away and hope for the best."

No urgency to provide all-seat stadiums

Football clubs slow to meet Taylor demands

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

FOOTBALL League clubs were yesterday accused of "patchy" progress as they face up to the £400 million demands of all-seater stadiums. Next week marks the second anniversary of Lord Justice Taylor's report into the Hillsborough disaster and a Football League survey has shown that many clubs are lagging behind with their ground improvement plans.

First and second division clubs have until August 1994 to eliminate standing accommodation, with the third and fourth divisions allowed an extra five years to follow suit.

Some top clubs, including Manchester City, were holding back for a decision on whether clubs that plan to join the Premier League would still qualify for a share of the government's £100 million hand-back from the share in pools betting duty.

They heard yesterday that those that applied before January 13 will receive grant aid from the Football Trust, provided that work is completed or under way by the end of the 1992 close season.

The Trust had asked for clarification from the government as, under the existing agreement, it could give aid only to Football and Scottish League clubs. There was no provision made for the Premier League.

Robert Atkins, the minister for sport, said: "We have made clear to the Football Trust that in our view they should continue to pay grant aid to any club in the present first division for works to be completed or underway by the end of this coming close season."

"I hope that the Trust will be able to take decisions quickly on applications."

The government money is being spread over five years and Coventry City, Liverpool, Millwall and Leeds United are among the main beneficiaries so far, with more than £2 million each from the 1990-1 distribution.

All clubs will be hoping to meet the Taylor criteria, but, according to John de Quidt, the chief executive of the Football Licensing Authority (FLA), it is not all good news. "We were consulted over the Football League questionnaire and we have had copies of the returns," he said. "And the quality of response doesn't correlate with the size of clubs or their divisions. The results are patchy and there are clubs which are causing us considerable concern."

"Some clubs have got their act together regarding all-seater and were doing so before we came on the scene. But some, including a number in the second division, are drifting. They still don't believe it will happen: that it will go away."

That looks far from the case. FLA inspectors have been monitoring events since early last year, and de Quidt warned: "Clubs will be requested to submit a major business plan to us this summer."

London will be a leading area of activity. Arsenal and West Ham United have launched debenture schemes in a bid to raise the £35 million costs of refurbishment. Chelsea are looking to totally rebuild Stamford Bridge and Millwall are set to move to a new stadium at nearby Senegal Fields.

The cost to London clubs has been put at £150 million, but de Quidt countered: "London is not typical of the country as a whole, with its high proportion of first division clubs and large grounds."

It is widely accepted that many clubs will go for the easy option and close sections of their ground rather than spend money on seats. "Clubs don't have to convert all of their grounds to all-seater and we shouldn't be telling them how many they must have," de Quidt said. "In many cases, clubs already have more seats than spectators, and I think that there are a number who will choose to close existing accommodation and consolidate rather than put in seats."

Chelsea in court, page 35



At full stretch: Stefan Edberg reaches for the ball on the forehead side during his victory over Ivan Lendl in the quarter-finals of the Australian Open in Melbourne. Edberg will meet Wayne Ferreira, of South Africa, in the semi-finals. Report page 32.

Board prepared to take notice

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S proposed international matches against South Africa would probably be cancelled by the British Athletic Federation (BAF) if its black athletes refused to compete. "I would not want to take a team which is racially divided," Les Jones, the British men's team manager, said yesterday as two more world championship medal winners followed the lead of John Regis and Linford Christie and threatened to boycott.

Derek Redmond and Tony Jarrett gave their support to the views expressed by Regis and Christie that, even if South Africa is welcomed back by the International Amateur Athletic Federation in time for the fixtures to proceed, Britain should not act so hastily. "If there is a body of opinion within our team which says we should not go there, we would be stupid not to listen," Jones said. "Serious consideration would have to be given to that fixture. It would not help the athletes of South Africa to throw them back into a political cauldron." Christie had suggested that no British black athletes would compete in South Africa.

But an appeal to the athletes was made last night by

Banali Sindani, a radical whose presence at recent unity talks precipitated an exodus by white officials before his appointment as co-president of Athletics South Africa, a composite of white and black administrations. "If I thought an international match served no useful purpose I would be the last to endorse it," Sindani said.

Matches are planned for Cape Town on May 23 and 24 and Edinburgh on June 19 but, since South Africa is not even on the IAAF agenda for discussion at the council meeting being held in Mexico City, the country's readmission in time seems unlikely.



Jarrett: backs Christie

Christie's protest out of touch with world affairs

BY DAVID MILLER

THE argument between Linford Christie, the captain of the British athletics team, and the British Athletic Federation about the proposed match against South Africa in Cape Town in May demonstrates the continuing insularity of the British from world affairs. Christie is pursuing a legitimate moral argument without being aware it is seriously out of date.

"After all these years of representing Britain and of being asked to act as an ambassador, it is sad to think the officials don't really care about the athletes," Christie complained, saying that many of the team who were black had not been consulted, and that he would refuse to compete.

It is nothing new, of course, for the British federation to act in defiance of some or even all of the competitors it represents. Unfortunately for Christie, it is he and his fellow black athlete, John Regis, who voices the same complaint, that are now exhibiting the greater ignorance.

It would seem that Christie is unaware of events in South Africa over the past 18 months. If the formation

of a new, unified South African Olympic Committee is approved by Nelson Mandela, by the United Nations anti-apartheid committee, by the Organisation of African Unity and the Supreme Council of Sport in Africa and by Sam Rainsbury, for 20 years the leader of the anti-apartheid sporting movement, who are Christie and Regis to protest?

For so long, their view would have been widely accepted, in Britain and elsewhere. Too much of British sport has wistfully flouted the embargo against sporting relations with South Africa, contrary to the Gleneagles Agreement.

Lenny Paul, a sprinting partner of Christie who is hoping to find a place in the relay squad for Barcelona, is in Berchtesgaden for the European bobsleigh championships. He said yesterday: "I think a lot of people may feel the same as Linford and will support him. I don't think the British federation told people clearly enough what they were doing. I would like more information about the situation in South Africa, and maybe Linford needs that too."

It is difficult for the British federation to take any action in connection with South Africa without it being recalled how shoddily its predecessor, the British Amateur Athletic Board, behaved when scrambling through Zola Budd's citizenship so she might expediently compete in the Olympic Games in 1984.

Christie, Regis and all the other black competitors who represent Britain and continue to hold honorable anti-apartheid views, need to educate themselves. They are unaware, for instance, that the vice-chairman of South Africa's newly readmitted Olympic committee, Mkhel George, has rather more reason than they to resent the established white South African regime. He spent five years as a political prisoner, yet says: "If we continue with the policy of 'no normal sport in an abnormal society', when would unification in sport ever begin. South African sport has to prepare itself for the future, for the freedom that is coming. If we wait too long, then by the time absolute freedom arrives, what will have become of sport?"

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MAPIN & WEBB, GATESHEAD, ERNEST JONES, GLASGOW, ERNEST
JONES, MAPIN & WEBB, GLENAGE, MAPIN & WEBB, GLAZING, ERNEST
JONES, ST. YAMMOUTH, COX & SON, GUILDFORD, MAPIN & WEBB
HALIFAX, LISTER, HORSFALL, HARRIGATE, FATTORINI
HEATHROW, MAPIN & WEBB, ST. MARY'S, LISTER, HORSFALL
LEEDS, HERRIS, MANCHESTER, MAPIN & WEBB, MIDDLESBROUGH
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ROBINSON & SON, OSSETT, J. DEAN, OXFORD, JOHN COWING, PRESTON
CLIFFORD, BAKER, SOUTHPORT, WELDON, ST. HELLIER, ERNEST JONES
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Wales unchanged in the search for stability

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

WALES, for only the third time in six years, have named an unchanged XV for their five nations' championship match against France at Cardiff Arms Park on February 1. Not that change was in the air after the one-point win over Ireland last weekend; that was the first Welsh victory in the championship since 1989.

However, a measure of the task confronting Wales is that they have not beaten France anywhere since 1982, includ-

ing the latest encounter, in September last year, when France helped to celebrate the official inauguration of the Arms Park floodlights.

Robert Norster, the Wales team manager, underlined yesterday the desire to bring stability to the national side, after two years of incessant, and sometimes, obsessive, change. "I think by keeping them together we will get more out of them on February 1," Norster said. "There is a lot more to come from this team, although we all realise there is a lot more work that needs to be put in as well."

Everyone in the Welsh camp has their feet firmly on the ground, despite the win in Ireland, and we are looking to improve at every stage."

The game will be Robert Jones's fortieth appearance, making the Swansea scrum half the sixth Welshman to attain that mark. The team trained last night and will reassemble in Cardiff next Wednesday, when the importance of discipline will doubtless be mentioned once more.

Alan Davies, the coach, has already talked to Tony Cospey, the Llanelli lock whose punch reduced the ef-

fectiveness of Neil Francis, the Irish lock, at Lansdowne Road. "It was very nearly a hard lesson to learn and I would not expect him to react in the same way again," Davies said. "The fact that we put into practice against Ireland some of the things we have been trying to do is good, but the French will be totally different."

It is the first time since 1988 that Wales have opened their championship season with a win, but they will need no reminding that last year's match in Paris produced France's record points tally,

with six tries in a 36-3 victory. Didier Camberabero, the Béziers stand-off half who has won 32 caps for France, will miss the game because he has an injured thigh. He is likely to be replaced by Alain Penaud, of Brive, with Pierre Moniaur, of Agen, added to the squad as cover.

Should Penaud play, France will field at least seven players who are new to the championship, though several of them have been capped on tour or against Romania.

Scotland, who do not play in the next round of games, will hold a squad training

weekend at St Andrews. Kevin Armstrong, the brother of the injured scrum half, Gary, and Fergus Wallace, of Glasgow High-Kelvinside, are included in the forwards.

WALES XV: Francis, A. Climent (Scarlets); Evans (Cardiff), Capstick, S. G. Goss (Scarlets); W. Jones (Cardiff), M. Hall (Cardiff); C. Stephens (Cardiff), R. Jones (Scarlets); M. Collins (Cardiff), G. Jenkins (Scarlets); J. Gentry (Llanelli), E. Lewis (Cardiff); S. Williams (Scarlets); A. Jones (Cardiff); M. Poyer (Cardiff); D. Jones (Scarlets); D. For (Cardiff); R. For (Cardiff); M. Morris (Scarlets).

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